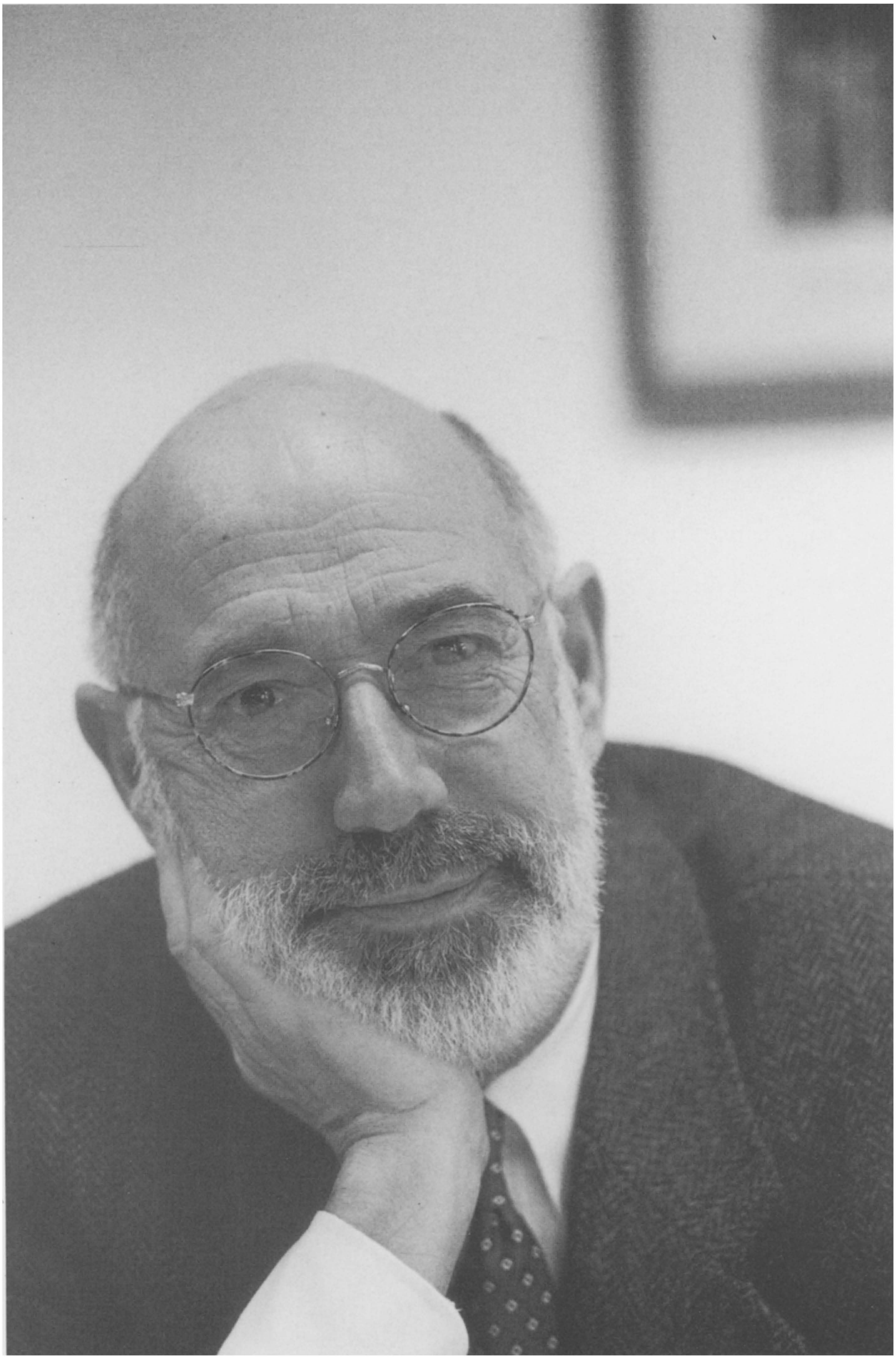
KYKEON

RELIGIONS IN THE GRAECO-ROMAN WORLD

EDITORS

R. VAN DEN BROEK H.J.W. DRIJVERS†
H.S. VERSNEL

VOLUME 142



Professor H.S. Versnel

KYKEON

Studies in Honour of H.S. Versnel

EDITED BY

H.F.J. HORSTMANSHOFF, H.W. SINGOR,
F.T. VAN STRATEN & J.H.M. STRUBBE

BRILL
LEIDEN · BOSTON · KÖLN
2002

This series Religions in the Graeco-Roman World presents a forum for studies in the social and cultural function of religions in the Greek and the Roman world, dealing with pagan religions both in their own right and in their interaction with and influence on Christianity and Judaism during a lengthy period of fundamental change. Special attention will be given to the religious history of regions and cities which illustrate the practical workings of these processes.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Die Deutsche Bibliothek – CIP-Einheitsaufnahme

Kykeon : studies in honour of H.S. Versnel / ed. by H.F.J. Horstmanshoff
– Leiden ; Boston ; Köln : Brill, 2002
(Religions in the Graeco-Roman world ; Vol. 142)
ISBN 90-04-11983-3

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Library of Congress Cataloging-in Publication Data is also available

ISSN 0927-7633
ISBN 90 04 11983 3

© Copyright 2002 by Koninklijke Brill NV, *Leiden, The Netherlands*

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Brill provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910 Danvers MA 01923, USA. Fees are subject to change.

PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

CONTENTS

Preface vii

'Mythos und Ritual' im Wechselwind der Moderne 1
WALTER BURKERT

Ritual Dynamics: The Boiotian Festival of the Daidala 23
ANGELOS CHANIOTIS

Mediterrane Religionsgeschichte, Römische Religionsgeschichte, Europäische Religionsgeschichte: Zur Genese eines Fachkonzepts 49
BURKHARD GLADIGOW

Shaping the Text: Innovation and Authority in Graeco-Egyptian Malign Magic 69
RICHARD GORDON

What is New about Greek Sacrifice? 113
FRITZ GRAF

The Apocalypse of John and the Imperial Cult 127
HENK JAN DE JONGE

The Cult of Aphrodite Pandamos and Pontia on Cos 143
ROBERT PARKER

Der Fuß des Dionysos: Zu *PMG* 871 161
RENATE SCHLESIER

Apollo and Dionysos: Starting from Birth 193
FROMA I. ZEITLIN

Index of Names and Subjects 219
Index of Ancient Sources 223

PREFACE

On the 1st of September 2000 Henk S. Versnel retired from his position at the heart of the Ancient History Department of Leiden University. He had first held a personal chair of Ancient Greek and Roman Religion since 1978, and then, since 1994, the full professorship of Ancient History and Epigraphy. As *collega proximus* for many years of Harry W. Pleket, at whose retirement in 1994 he succeeded to the established chair of Ancient History, and ever since, Versnel in many respects put his stamp upon the Department, preserving and even enhancing its reputation among both students and colleagues. Notwithstanding his well-known and often openly declared aversion to anything smelling of a *Festschrift* or an honorary colloquium, we, as his *collegae proximi minores*, found it more than proper to honour him with precisely that: an international Colloquium held at Leiden on May 11th and 12th 2000. Not unexpectedly, Versnel himself greatly enjoyed the event at which a number of distinguished colleagues and friends presented papers on a range of topics illustrating the variety of subjects Versnel had been interested in during his academic career. We are happy to present them here together, forming, so to speak, an initiatory or semi-magical potion or *Kykeôn*, that opens up some of the vistas of ancient religions and mentalities that have always so fascinated Versnel. His numerous publications cover, broadly, four main areas in this wide field: Archaic Roman institutions (the subject of his PhD thesis on the Triumph in 1970), sacrifice, magic, and, lastly, inconsistencies in Greek and Roman religion.

The contributions to the Symposium, pertaining to most of the areas mentioned above, had been arranged into two sessions; one on magic, curses and ambiguities (R. Gordon, R. Schlesier, R. Parker), the other on prayer and sacrifice (A. Chaniotis, H.J. de Jonge, F. Graf), while in between F. Zeitlin and B. Gladigow held keynote lectures on Greek and Roman Religion respectively. Preceding them all W. Burkert opened the Colloquium with his general lecture on myth and ritual in the changing light of modern research. In broad outline, the succession of papers that follows reflects the order of the colloquium itself.

The *kykeôn* has been prepared and set before us.... To Henk Versnel *bene merito*!

H.F.J. Horstmanshoff
H.W. Singor
F.T. van Straten
J.H.M. Strubbe

'MYTHOS UND RITUAL' IM WECHSELWIND DER MODERNE

WALTER BURKERT

Wenn ich recht verstanden habe, erwartet man zu Ehren Henk Versnels aus religionswissenschaftlicher Arbeit einen methodischen Überblick, Rückblick, Ausblick, durchaus in persönlicher Sicht und aus eigener Erfahrung. Der persönliche Weg, auf dem man sich tastend voranbewegt hat, und der scheinbar objektive Gang 'der Wissenschaft', wie er sich nachträglich konstruieren läßt, stehen allerdings in einem dialektischen Spannungsverhältnis. Es gibt reine Zufälligkeiten der persönlichen Begegnungen; und doch erscheint das meiste im nachhinein den allgemeineren Trends durchaus zugeordnet. Selbst wenn man sich den eigenen Elfenbeinturm einzurichten sucht, lebt man nicht isoliert, sondern steht in einem Zirkel des Austausches oder zumindest in einem Feld der Resonanzen; da gibt es Verstärkungen, manchmal unerwartete Verstärkungen, die dann eine neue Lage schaffen.

Das Thema 'Mythos und Ritual' hat mich selbst Jahrzehnte lang beschäftigt, ja beherrscht; doch auch Henk Versnel hat diesem Thema eine durchgreifende Behandlung gewidmet, nachdem seine eigenen Anfänge in der religionswissenschaftlichen Forschung von eben diesem Thema deutlich gezeichnet waren.[1] Die Entwicklung von Thesen und Wirkungsketten der 'myth and ritual'—Thematik ist oft nachgezeichnet worden.[2] Hier bleibt nur kurz zu resümieren: Man findet entscheidende Anfänge im 19. Jh. bei Wilhelm Mannhardt und Hermann Usener und hat dann, neben Robertson Smith und James George Frazer, bei Jane Harrison den eigentlichen Ansatz. Harrison behandelte 1890 in ihrem Buch *Mythology and Monuments of Ancient Athens* den Text des Pausanias über die Arrhephoroi von Athen;[3] sie sah den Zusammenhang mit dem Mythos von den Kekropstöchtern und formulierte, Mythos sei offensichtlich 'ritual misunderstood'.[4] Harrison hat dann das Thema der männlichen Initiation 1912 im Anfangskapitel ihres Buchs *Themis* aufgegriffen[5]—drei Jahre nach Van Genneps einflußreichem Essai über *Les rites de passage*.[6] Schlüsseltext war diesmal der Hymnos von Palekastro, der dem göttlichen 'größten Kuros' gilt, der da aufs Jahr zur Dikte 'kommen' und 'springen' soll; wie Harrison sah, sind es natürlich die realen, im Kult aktiven κοῦροι, die da zum Jahresfest tanzen und springen, und damit die eigene jugendliche 'Passage' vollziehen. Harrison formulierte jetzt: 'the myth is the plot of the dromenon', aber auch: myth and ritual 'arise pari passu'.[7] Damit sind, streng genommen, bereits drei Möglichkeiten des Verhältnisses von Mythos und Ritus vorgeschlagen, Mythos entweder als mißverstandenes Ritual oder als diesem gleichgeordnet oder gar als organisierende Formkraft, als 'plot' des Rituals. Wichtiger als Distinktionen war aber zunächst die Synthesis, die Verstärkung, die durch die Verbindung von zwei Kommunikationsformen gewonnen war; dazu kam in *Themis* eine weitere Tiefendimension durch den prinzipiellen Einbezug der Durkheimschen Soziologie.

---

[1] Versnel 1970, bes. 201–255: 'Gods, Kings and the New Year Festival'; Versnel 1993, 15–88.

[2] Verwiesen sei auf Kirk 1970; Burkert 1980 und 1993; Graf 1985/1991^3; Ackermann 1991; Versnel 1993.

[3] Harrison 1890, xxvi–xxxvi; Pausanias 1,27,3; mein erster einschlägiger Aufsatz, Burkert 1966a, hat hier eingesetzt.

Der Impuls von Harrison, in Verbindung mit Frazers monumentalem *Golden Bough*, hat zunächst in England gewirkt, besonders durch Harrisons jüngere Freunde, Francis Macdonald Cornford in Cambridge und Gilbert Murray alsbald in Oxford.[8] In der nächsten Generation standen dann etwa George Thomson und T.B.L. Webster.[9] In Deutschland, wo sich gerade die Religionswissenschaft des Altertums in der Nachfolge Useners etablierte, mit Albrecht Dieterich, Richard Wünsch, Martin Nilsson, mit dem *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* und den *Religionsgeschichtlichen Versuchen und Vorarbeiten*, wurde Harrison kaum rezipiert; nur daß Carl Robert 1915 Oidipus den unseligen Wanderer zum 'Jahrgott' machte, zeigt eine Wirkung an. Martin Nilsson wandte seine gewaltigen Energien dem Minoisch-Mykenischen zu, einem

---

[4] Harrison 1890, iii, xxxiii.

[5] Harrison 1912, 1–29; der Text: I.U. Powell, *Collectanea Alexandrina* (Oxford 1925) 160–162. *Inscriptiones Creticae* III 2,2; M.L. West, *JHS* 85 (1965) 149–159; Fontenrose 1971, 63–66.

[6] Van Gennep 1909.

[7] Harrison 1912, 331; 16. Vgl. Versnel 1993, 29.

[8] Sie haben zu *Themis* wichtige Kapitel beigesteuert, Cornford 1912, Murray 1912.

[9] Siehe etwa Thomson 1949, Webster 1958.

Bereich ohne Sprache. Diesen hatte Arthur Evans mit Frazerschen Kategorien zu erschließen unternommen;[10] 'Mythos' fehlt uns dort bis heute. In Frankreich gelangte, trotz Distanz der eigentlichen Durkheimianer,[11] der Impuls Harrisons zu Henri Jeanmaire, der dem Thema der *Kureten* ein gründliches Buch widmete,[12] und zu Louis Gernet, der aber, nach Algerien verschlagen, erst nach 1950 zu spätem Einfluß kam, vor allem dank Jean-Pierre Vernant.

Nach dem ersten Weltkrieg gab es für 'Mythos und Ritual' zwei selbständig weiterführende Linien, die sich gegenseitig verstärkten und es im angelsächsischen Raum zu rechter Popularität brachten, bis in die 'schöne Literatur' hinein. Diese betrafen Altes Testament und Alten Orient einerseits, die allgemeine Ethnologie andererseits. Für die empirische Ethnologie—um damit zu beginnen—war Bronislav Malinowski epochemachend. Ihn hatte Frazers 'Golden Bough' zur Ethnologie gezogen. Er brachte mit seinen Forschungen bei den 'Argonauten des Pazifik' ein ganz neues, direktes Verständnis für das, was man seit dem 19. Jh. sehr von oben herab 'primitiv' genannt hatte. 'Myth in Primitive Psychology' erschien 1926;[13] ein besonderer Gewinn war der Begriff des 'Charter Myth',[14] schlecht auf deutsch zu übersetzen: Mythos als regulierende Begründung für Details der Lebensordnung, als 'Magna Carta' oder auch speziellere 'Carta', also in einer etwas veränderten 'Plot'-Funktion, nicht direkt in rituelle Aktion umgesetzt. In Deutschland führten die Forschungen des Frobenius-Instituts auf West-Ceram in ähnliche Richtung; sie brachten den 'Hainuwele'-Mythos zur Kenntnis, einen Mythos um ein Mädchen, das sich durch Tanz und Tötung in Knollenfrüchte verwandelt.[15] Hier frappierte eine gewisse Parallele zur griechischen Persephone, was von Walter F. Otto, Karl Kerényi, C.G. Jung und auch Angelo Brelich aufgegriffen wurde. Französische Forscher studierten ihrerseits 'la mythologie vécue' in Französisch-Afrika, bei den Dogon im Kongo.[16]

---

[10] Evans 1901.

[11] Dazu Versnel 1993, 48f.

[12] Jeanmaire 1939.

[13] Malinowski 1926, auch in Malinowski 1954, 93–148.

[14] Malinowski 1954, 85.

[15] Jensen 1939; Jung-Kerényi 1941. Vgl. auch Chirassi 1969. Kritisch Smith 1978, 302–307.

[16] Griaule 1938; Dieterlen 1978.

Zum Schlagwort wurde *Myth and Ritual* eben damals nicht in der Ethnologie, sondern in der Historie, durch das Buch von S.H. Hooke.[17] Die Entdeckung, daß im Ritual des Babylonischen Neujahrs-Festes das Weltschöpfungsepos *Enuma elish* formell rezitiert wurde—der Ritual-Text war seit 1921 zugänglich[18]—, gab einen entscheidenden Anstoß: Hier fand man einen umfänglichen, vielschichtigen, literarisch ausgearbeiteten Mythos vom Götterkampf in seinem Kontext, als Bestandteil des Festrituals. Der Mythos, wurde jetzt formuliert, sei 'the spoken part of the ritual', 'the story which the ritual enacts'.[19] Als spekulativer Hintergrund erschien das sakrale Königtum, die Erneuerung der Königskraft im Fest—das hatte schon Frazer im *Golden Bough* in etwa so gesehen. Alttestamentliche Königsideologie ließ sich in paralleler Weise herausarbeiten, etwa Advents-Psalmen als Königsritual, Königs-Einzug als Gottes Einzug.[20] Der Göttermythos ist präsent im Königsritual, das er reflektiert und steuert.

In diese Perspektive fügten sich dann besonders die mythisch-rituellen Texte aus Ugarit, die eben um 1930 entschlüsselt wurden; ihrer hat sich vor allem Theodore Gaster angenommen.[21] In seiner Interpretation verbinden sich die Königs- und die Jahreszeiten-Rituale zu einem Schema des 'Stirb und Werde'. Der von Harrison konstruierte *Eniautos Daimon* schien Wirklichkeit geworden. Die etwa gleichzeitig entzifferten hethitischen Texte machten vor allem wegen ihrer Parallelen zu griechischen Mythen, zu Hesiod Sensation. Der Text vom *Königtum im Himmel* tritt zu *Enuma elish*, zu Hesiod und zum Phönikischen, und gemeinsam konstituieren sie den Sukzessions-Mythos, der dem *myth-and-ritual*-Schema verbunden bleibt.[22] Der hethitische Illuyankas-Mythos ist ausdrücklich mit einem Fest verbunden.

Allerdings strotzen gerade die Ugarit-Texte von Problemen, wenig umfangreich wie sie sind, fragmentarisch, nicht selten rein sprachlich mehrdeutig, mit ungewissem Kontext; die Baal-Texte zumal sind insofern kein günstiger Ansatzpunkt für Popularisierung. Auch beim Material aus Babylon hat man aus Halbverstandenem gelegentlich vorschnelle Schlüsse gezogen: für einen rituellen Drachenkampf etwa gibt es, soweit ich sehe, kein einziges sicheres Zeugnis; ja daß die böse Urmutter 'Meer', Tiamat, ein Drache sei, steht nicht im Text von *Enuma elish*, und die bildlichen Zeugnisse vom Drachenkampf, die sich über zwei Jahrtausende verteilen, sind mit den Texten nicht sicher liiert.[23] Aber dabei wird es bleiben, daß die Zusammengehörigkeit von polytheistischen Göttergeschichten und Götterfesten in einer nahöstlich-ägäischen Koiné deutlicher zutage tritt als in der verengten Sicht der 'klassischen' griechischen Poesie.

---

[17] Hooke 1933.

[18] Thureau-Dangin 1921, 127–154; *ANET* 331–334; vgl. Auffarth 1991, 45–55.

[19] Hooke 1933, 3.

[20] Vgl. Mowinckel 1953.

[21] Siehe de Moor 1987; Gaster 1950; 1959.

[22] *ANET* 120f.; 125f.; Steiner 1959.

Der zweite Weltkrieg schuf einen Leerraum; danach herrschte zunächst die englisch-amerikanische Perspektive. Eine zusammenfassende Theorie für 'Myth and Ritual' hatte Clyde Kluckhohn 1942 vorgeschlagen. Der erste internationale Kongreß für Religionswissenschaft 1951 war dem Thema 'Myth and Ritual' gewidmet.[24] Ein Ethnologe wie E.R. Leach formulierte 1954 mit Selbstverständlichkeit: 'Myth, in my terminology, is the counterpart of ritual'.[25] Auch die Klassische Philologie nahm jetzt davon Kenntnis, mit Kritik und Distanzierung, so Herbert Jennings Rose (1950), Martin Nilsson, (1951), später noch Joseph Fontenrose (1966). Dabei markierte Hookes zweites Buch, *Myth, Ritual, and Kingship* von 1958, eigentlich bereits den Niedergang der 'Bewegung', wenn es denn eine war.

Damals geriet ich in den Bereich dieser Thematik. Ich habe, scheint mir, mit einem eher ziellosen Schlendern und Blumenpflücken begonnen; aber durch wiederholtes und intensives Herumwandern ist wohl doch eine allgemeinere und präzisere Kartierung zustandgekommen. Am Anfang stand das Interesse für das 'Irrationale', was zu Dodds bedeutendem Buch *The Greeks and the Irrational* führte. Hieraus, und aus dem Aufsatz *Skythica* von Karl Meuli, von dem Dodds bereits zehrt, habe ich unter anderem die Offenheit für den Begriff des 'Schamanismus' gewonnen, nicht so sehr der Exotik wegen als darum, weil hier das Mirakulöse als Realität auftritt, oder umgekehrt eine rituelle Wirklichkeit die phantastischen Erzählungen speist. Ein Glücksfall war, seit 1958, die Begegnung mit Reinhold Merkelbach. Merkelbach arbeitete an seinem Buch über den griechischen Roman,[26] er entwickelte eine These über die Romane als Mysterientexte, als verschlüsselte Darstellungen von Mysterienritualen; er sprach davon, wie man von den Erzählmotiven immer wieder auf rituellen Hintergrund geführt werde. Merkelbachs Thesen sind kontrovers geblieben. Sie machten mich aber sozusagen zum Quereinsteiger in den Bereich von Mythos und Ritual.

---

[23] Vgl. Merkelbach *RAC* IV 232 s.v. 'Drache'; Burkert 1987.

[24] Bleeker-Drewes-Hidding 1951.

[25] Leach 1954, 13.

[26] Merkelbach 1962, vgl. 1995.

Unvergeßliche Eindrücke brachte eine Reise nach Unteritalien: Kurz hintereinander sah ich die *Villa dei Misteri* in Pompei und die nächtliche Karfreitagsprozession in Sorrento: Hier ein rauhes, abschreckendes Ritual, das aus der Demonstration des Todes ein geheimes Postulat der Auferstehung gewinnen möchte; dort die Sequenz der erotisch faszinierenden Bilder mit ihren Andeutungen von Sexualität, Strafe und befreiendem Tanz; Merkelbach hat, nach anderen, das 'Märchen' von Amor und Psyche zu den Bildern der 'Villa' gestellt.[27]

Damals habe ich in Angriff genommen, was ich zunächst 'Griechische Mysterien' nannte, bald schon 'Initiationsrituale'—so mein 1964 formuliertes Projekt für das Center for Hellenic Studies in Washington D.C. (1965/6)—und was schließlich zum Studium der Opferrituale wurde. Schrittweise arbeitete ich mich auch in jene 'objektive' Geschichte der Wissenschaft ein, von der die Rede war, wobei mein persönlicher Pfad bei Angelo Brelich einsetzte, zurück zu Harrison, von Harrisons *Themis* zur französischen Soziologie einerseits, zu Freuds Totem und Tabu andererseits führte. Auf die Erweiterung in Richtung auf die Prähistorie, die Urgeschichte der Menschen, ja die 'Hominisation' überhaupt, führte Karl Meuli mit seinen 'Opferbräuchen'; und dann erschien gerade das Buch von Konrad Lorenz, *Das sogenannte Böse*,[28] das eine noch breitere, biologische Basis erschloß. Konrad Lorenz lieferte insbesondere einen eigentlich zoologischen Ritual-Begriff, der mir geeignet schien, auch in der Religionswissenschaft festgehalten und angewandt zu werden: Ritual als Handlung mit Zeichen-Charakter. Die Ethologie der Aggression, wie sie Konrad Lorenz entwickelte, bot die Chance zu verstehen, was mich gerade bei den Griechen von 'Amor und Psyche' wieder abgeführt und eher in den Karfreitagsbereich zurückgebracht hatte, die Rolle von Blutvergießen, Kämpfen und Töten in der altgriechischen Religion und Kunst, von den archaischen Tempelgiebeln und Vasenbildern bis zur klassischen Tragödie. Grundgedanken habe ich, mit einer Vorlesung über 'Greek tragedy and sacrificial ritual', 1965 in Oxford vorgetragen.[29] Das Endergebnis war mein Buch *Homo Necans*, das 1971 fertig wurde.[30]

---

[27] Merkelbach 1962, 48–50.

[28] Lorenz 1963.

Aus einem Abstand von fast 30 Jahren wird allerdings deutlich, wie jede These dieses Buchs einen Schweif von Problemen nach sich zieht.

1. *Homo Necans* war in meiner Sicht in erster Linie ein Buch über Mythos und Ritual; ich hatte den Eindruck, als sei ich der erste, der umfassend und methodisch die Parallelismen der beiden Phänomene im griechischen Material verfolgte. Nicht nur im Nahen Osten ist beides nebeneinander zu finden und gemeinsam zu berücksichtigen. Es handelt sich um zwei Systeme der Zeichengebung, die sich immer wieder treffen und aneinander hängen. Betrachtet man sie miteinander, werden sie sich gegenseitig erhellen. Gemeinsam zeigen sie eine dynamische Gliederung, Gelenke, Peripetien. Damit ist die hermeneutische Aufgabe gestellt, die Splitter der Überlieferung in ihrem gegenseitigen Zusammenhang zu sammeln und zu sortieren. Man gewinnt auch für Fragmente einen Kontext und kann möglicherweise einen Sinn erfassen. Es wird auch möglich, die rituellen Hinweise gerade der klassischen Dichtung, bei Pindar etwa und Aischylos, nicht als kuriose Schnörkel sondern als Zeichen zu verstehen, die zentralen Aufschluß geben.[31]

2. Für den Mythos ergibt sich aus der rituellen Perspektive ein Bezugspunkt: Mythen stehen nicht als Fiktionen im Leeren, sondern als normgebende Aussagen in sozialem Kontext. Sie erscheinen nicht als wunderliche—schöpferische oder absurde—Erfindungen, die man von Fall zu Fall als Dichtungen einordnen mag, deren Fortgestaltung man historisch festmachen kann. Mythos als 'traditional tale' ist nicht ein Text, auch nicht eine gerade erfundene Geschichte, sondern eine Sinnstruktur, die wiederholbar und zugleich variabel ist. Parallel dazu bietet Ritual ein Zentrum des Wiederholbaren, vielleicht ein Sinnzentrum.

3. Für die Rituale ihrerseits ergibt sich vom Mythos her ein 'menschlicher' Zugang, insofern die Perspektive einer—stets anthropomorphen—Erzählung erscheint. Ritual ist nicht, mit Frazer, als

---

[29] Burkert 1966b.

[30] Burkert 1972. Es gab kaum Rezensionen, insbesondere nicht in *Gnomon*.

[31] Dazu Krummen 1990.

Ausfluß eines 'tragischen Irrtums' zu betrachten, als Versuch einer der primitiven Mentalität entsprungenen Magie, sondern—mit Meuli—als durchaus verständlicher Ausdruck menschlichen Empfindens. Ritual erscheint dann allenfalls in sekundärer Interpretation als eine Zweckhandlung. Insofern fand ich mich in Frontstellung gegen Ludwig Deubner—so sehr seine philologische Kompetenz anzuerkennen blieb—, der immer wieder auf Manipulation von unpersönlichen Fruchtbarkeits- und Segenskräften abstellt.[32]

Zugleich ergibt sich vom Mythos her fürs Ritual auch eine ordnende, dynamische Struktur, ein 'plot'. Die Anregung durch van Gennep kommt hier zum Tragen. Mein Ansatz begann im Bereich der Initiationen, mit der Chance, eine Märchenerzählung wie 'Amor und Psyche' zur Erhellung einer Ritensequenz einzusetzen. Als dann die Opferhandlungen ins Zentrum traten, erschienen sie ihrerseits als Drama in drei Phasen, mit der einleitenden Vorbereitung, der 'unsagbaren' Mitte und dem ordnenden Abschluß. Ein Dreischritt also auch hier, der sich auch aus den mythischen Erzählungen herausfiltern ließ.

4. Die Konzentration aufs Ritual führt allerdings über die Philologie im eigentlichen Sinn, als Wissenschaft von gestalteten Sprachzeugnissen, hinaus. Wir geraten in einen Kontext von kollektivem Handeln und damit in die Analyse von soziologisch-anthropologischen Systemen und Funktionen. Als ich den Begriff des Rituals als kommunikativen Handelns von der Verhaltensforschung übernahm, war noch kaum abzusehen, welche Bedeutung 'Semiologie' anzunehmen begann.

Wohin wir auf diese Weise schließlich gelangen, ob wir irgendwo ankommen im Raum der Gesellschaft und ihrer Geschichte, ist damit noch keineswegs ausgelotet. Die Aufgabe ist gestellt, Sinn oder Funktion dieser Phänomene in einem weiteren Zusammenhang zu finden, aber wo man dies festmachen kann, darüber gibt es ganz divergente Ansichten. Durch die soziologisch-anthropologische Einbettung wird der Bereich des Unklaren, Unsicheren, Umstrittenen, Mißverstandenen und Mißverständlichen um viele Dimensionen erweitert. Wenn es eine alte Option war, bei 'der Religion' als einem letzten zu enden—das Ritual sei 'religiös', und damit Punktum—, wird Religionswissenschaft ihrerseits doch weiter fragen. Durkheim hat vorgeschlagen,

---

[32] Deubner 1932.

'die Gesellschaft' und ihre Solidarität als ein letztes anzusetzen; die Historie aber fragt zumindest auch nach der diachronen Dimension; in letzter Konsequenz steht eine evolutionäre Anthropologie ins Haus.

Auf den Spuren von Jane Harrison gelangte ich seinerzeit zu einem soziologisch-historischen Funktionalismus: Der Mensch als Wesen, das sich durch Rituale organisiert, die sich bewähren und durchsetzen. Sie haben sich im Lauf der Entwicklung zu Formen optimiert, die den Bestand der Gesellschaft langfristig ermöglichen, wahrscheinlich machen, wenn nicht sichern. Zentral war in meiner Sicht der Schock des notwendigen Tötens und die ebenso notwendige Entschuldung durch den Überwurf des Göttlichen. Man kann Ansätze der Semiologie integrieren: Der Mensch als Wesen, das sich durch Zeichengebung organisiert und durchsetzt. Das soziale Zusammenspiel wird in dieser Weise artikuliert und manipuliert, gerade durch 'Mythos und Ritual', etwa in der Initiation der Altersklassen, in Hochzeit, Geburt und Tod, in besonderer Weise auch im Krieg.

Das Soziale erscheint von hier aus als primär gegenüber den Gegebenheiten der Umwelt, dem Jahreslauf, der agrarischen Fruchtbarkeit. So versank die Bedeutung eines 'Jahreskönigs'. Die Naturmythologie des 19. Jh., die Farnell als 'a highly figurative discourse about the weather' verspottet hatte,[33] erschien als sekundäre Projektion sozialer Dynamik.

Damit verband sich in *Homo Necans* eine ins Weite schweifende historische Perspektive unter der Hypothese kultureller Kontinuitäten. Aus der paläolithischen Jagd-Gesellschaft ließen sich, dank den von Karl Meuli gewonnenen Perspektiven und Materialien, die Tieropfer recht direkt herleiten. Mit der Rolle von Jagd und der Fleischnahrung ist auch die wirtschaftliche Grundlage der sozialen Organisation im Blick. Vorausgesetzt ist die prägende Weitergabe von Ritualen in menschlichen Kulturen, die der 'rational choice' des Individuums nicht viel Raum lassen. Daß bei solcher 'Erziehung des Menschengeschlechtes' mit der Aggressivität zugleich eigentlich menschliches Mitempfinden exemplarisch gezeigt und trainiert wurde, glaube ich mit Meuli annehmen zu können. Den griechischen Befunden kann man, als dem Ältesten gut Verständlichen und Zugänglichen, sogar ihre 'klassische' Bedeutung belassen.

---

[33] Farnell 1896, 9.

Daß die Geschichte der Religionswissenschaft im allgemeinen und der Mytheninterpretation im besonderen auch ein Reflex zeitgenössischer Trends und Tendenzen sei, läßt sich nicht in Abrede stellen. Uns wird auffallen, wie der Neuansatz um 1900 mit dem Aufbruch des Expressionismus noch vor dem ersten Weltkrieg zusammengeht. Als Harrisons *Themis* erschien, führte Strawinsky in Paris *Le Sacre du Printemps* auf, 'la musique nègre', wie ein Kritiker sagte; das Sujet des Balletts, vom angeblichen jahreszeitlichen Mädchenopfer in Rußland, war durchaus Frazer-haft.[34] Die traditionell-bürgerliche, rationale, damals auch national verengte Welt geriet aus den Fugen; man war vom Exotischen fasziniert. So geriet bei den Cambridger Anthropologen auch das Klassische zum Exotischen, mit der Buntheit Gauguinscher Farben und Figuren. Die 'Argonauten des Pazifik' strahlen auf die Argonauten der Klassik aus. In Deutschland gehörte dazu die Rezeption von Nietzsche und die Wiederentdeckung von Bachofen, was dann zu Walter F. Otto führte. Man wird auch das Phänomen der Komplementarität beachten, wie da in Jahreszeitenfesten und agrarischer Fruchtbarkeit vergöttlicht und repristiniert wurde, was in europäischen Industriewüsten eben damals unterging, und wie die phantasievolle Ambivalenz der Sakralkönige gefeiert wurde, als Europas Gottes-Gnaden-Monarchen purzelten. Man hatte begonnen, soziale Systeme zu analysieren oder zu entwerfen, eben weil hergebrachte soziale Ordnungen nicht mehr selbstverständlich, nicht durchsichtig und im Grunde unhaltbar waren.

Schwieriger ist es, die eigene Zeit und Situation zu analysieren. Wenn ich die 60-er Jahre in der Erinnerung suche, erscheinen sie mir als eine Art Umkehrpunkt der Nachkriegszeit, im Banne noch des Kriegs, der Wiedererholung, inmitten fortbestehender Insekurität über Korea-Krieg, Kuba-Raketen-Krise, Vietnam-Krieg hinweg. Die Ablehnung des Kriegs, der Argwohn gegen Gewalt verband sich noch oder wieder mit einem gewissen Optimismus in Bezug auf unsere 'abendländische' Tradition, mit distanzierter Nähe zu einem längst problematischen Christentum, mit sehr bewußter Distanz zur ehemals bürgerlichen Welt des 19. Jh., auch zum Hegelschen Geistesfortschritt, mit sich lockernder Gesellschaftsmoral im Gefolge psychoanalytischer Aufklärung. Nach einer farbigen Welt der 'Wilden' hatte man kaum mehr Ausschau zu halten; man hatte die Barbarei zu nahe erlebt und konnte darum auch 'wilde' Klassik wahrnehmen und als Ordnung akzeptieren.

---

[34] Vgl. Burkert 1980, 182.

Daher die Akzeptanz dessen, was sich als positive Lebensordnung gab; so die Welt der Lebewesen in der Sicht des Biologen Konrad Lorenz, im Kontrast zu 'Todsünden' der Moderne.[35] Das 'sogenannte Böse', die Aggression war in seiner Sicht unverzichtbare Lebensmacht. Man war bereit, Formen von Gewalt als real zu akzeptieren, das 'Gute' im 'Bösen' zu sehen, im scheinbar Unsinnigen Sinn zu finden—und sei es im blutigen Opferritual, oder im Krieg als Initiation. Man suchte eher das 'gesunde Alte' in seinen notwendigen Paradoxien zu bewahren oder zurückzugewinnen, sei es in biologischer, sei es in historischer Perspektive. Daß in *Homo Necans* mit dem Motiv des 'schlechten Gewissens' und der Wiedergutmachung rechte Relikte christlicher Akkulturation am Werke sind, ist nicht zu bestreiten.

Dies geriet dann in Bewegung durch die Jungen von diesseits des Weltkriegs, die Hippies und die inzwischen legendären 'Achtundsechziger', auf die die etwas Älteren mit einer Mischung von Verständnis und Unverständnis blickten. Sie wollten jedenfalls nicht wieder einreißen, was gerade wieder aufgebaut worden war, und fühlten sich doch eher als modern denn als reaktionär.

Als fortschrittlich und 'links' erschien damals die moderne Linguistik und in ihrem Gefolge der Strukturalismus. Dieser war im wesentlichen das Werk von Claude Lévi-Strauss; er hat als eine neue, universelle Methode der Geisteswissenschaften Erfolg gehabt, vor allem im Französischen und Italienischen, auch im Angloamerikanischen, am wenigsten im Deutschen. Er erreichte den Höhepunkt seines Einflusses um 1970, doch stammt eine der meistzitierten Veröffentlichungen, 'The structural study of myth', bereits von 1955.[36]

Homo Necans hatte eine Opfer-Struktur entwickelt, analog der van Gennep-Struktur, kompatibel mit Propps Schema der Erzählung,[37] hatte aber den eigentlichen Strukturalismus noch nicht rezipiert. Versuche einer Auseinandersetzung folgten später im Kontakt mit Geoffrey Kirk, mit Marcel Detienne und mit Claude Calame; eindrücklich in Erinnerung ist mir ein von Claude Calame organisierter Kongreß in Urbino 1974.[38] Als geglückte Adaptationen im Klassisch-Philologischen

---

[35] Lorenz 1973.

[36] Lévi-Strauss 1955, vgl. 1964–1971.

[37] Vgl. Versnel 1993, 76.

[38] Publiziert als: *Il Mito greco. Atti del Convegno Internazionale*, Roma 1977.

Bereich würde ich das Adonis- und das Orpheus-Buch von Marcel Detienne hervorheben.[39]

Strukturalismus erlaubt, traditionelle Zeichensysteme, insbesondere auch Mythen und Rituale in Elemente oder 'Terme' aufzubrechen und diese auf ihre Relationen zu untersuchen, insbesondere Antithesen und Permutationen; man kann damit scheinbar willkürliche, wirre Einzelheiten verorten und integrieren. So wird ein eleganter und gleichzeitig farbig-konkreter Formalismus entwickelt, in dem Kojoten und Papageien oder Weihrauch und Knoblauch Bedeutungsmuster bilden. Mythen und Rituale können dabei durchaus parallel behandelt werden, die Methode ist aber auf ihren Zusammenhang nicht angewiesen. Es geht um Zeichensysteme überhaupt, ihren Aufbau, ihre Analysierbarkeit, ihre Transformationen. Strukturalismus braucht sich um das Funktionieren der Gesellschaft, die Ordnungen des Lebens und auch um die zufälligen Tatsachen der Geschichte nicht zu kümmern. Insofern entgeht er einer Menge von Fallgruben, Voraussetzungen, Zusatzhypothesen, die man im Funktionalismus mitschleppen muß. Lévi-Strauss zielt auf einen Geist-Begriff, den er ausdrücklich als menschlichen Geist versteht und von Biologischem fernhält.

Gegen den Strukturalismus nahmen meine *Sather Lectures* Stellung.[40] Es ging darum, die Historie im Sinne der Kulturkontinuität und auch im Sinne des Kulturtransfers zu verteidigen. Im Zentrum stand noch immer 'myth and ritual', jetzt aber ausdrücklich im Sinn einer sekundären Überlagerung; gebraucht wird die Metapher von der 'Flechte', in der sich Algen und Pilze zu einer charakteristischen Art von Gewächsen immer wieder neu verbinden. So sah ich in den zwei 'Sprachen' von Mythos und Ritual zwei Traditionen, die sich auch getrennt verfolgen lassen, verbunden aber zu besonderer Wirkung kommen. Im Blick sind gestaltende Kräfte, die auch wiederholte Selbstorganisation und damit eine gewisse Stabilität bewirken.

Die Kritik am Strukturalismus artikulierte vor allem den Verdacht, daß der Strukturalismus es gestattet, mit Elementen virtuos umzugehen, die man trotz alledem nicht versteht. Kann man Verstehen durch Akrobatik der Antithesen und Permutationen ersetzen? Man wird sich allerdings mit solchem Einspruch dem Verdacht aussetzen, einem altmodischen warm-menschlichen Verstehensbegriff anzuhängen, der auf dem Niveau höherer Abstraktion keine Berechtigung mehr hat. Im Postmodernen scheint er sich erst recht zu verflüchtigen.

---

[39] Detienne 1972; 1977; vgl. auch Graf 1981.

[40] Burkert 1979, 10–14.

Was hat sich seither geändert? Läßt sich dies, über persönliche Impressionen und Projektionen hinaus, überhaupt erfassen und beschreiben, oder findet man sich, älter werdend, lediglich überholt von dem, was man nicht mehr rezipiert? Verräterisch ist das Schlagwort 'postmodern' gerade wegen seiner Inhaltslosigkeit: Da sei etwas zu Ende gegangen, das man nicht weiter charakterisieren muß, und man weiß nicht zu sagen, was an seine Stelle tritt; nur daß die postmoderne Phase auch schon wieder zu Ende geht, glaubt man jetzt zu konstatieren.

Vielbesprochene Phänomene der Gegenwart spielen hier ineinander, vor allem die Explosion der Kommunikationsmöglichkeiten mit Computer und Internet zum einen, der Globalisierungseffekt mit dem Verschwinden traditioneller Orientierungen, Sicherheiten und Selbstverständlichkeiten zum andern. Ein Jahrmarkt der Beliebigkeiten bietet sich an, gespeist vom wachsenden Wohlstand nach dem Wegfall der Kriegsangst: Weltdorf zwischen Welt-Börse und Welt-Slum. Man spricht vom Ende der Geschichte; man könnte auch vom Ende der Gemeinschaften sprechen, der traditionellen Gemeinschaften, ob man nun auf Familien, Berufsgruppen, Stämme oder Nationen blickt. Trifft es zu, daß auch der Humanismus 'vergeht wie das in den Sand gezeichnete Gesicht des Menschen'?[41]

Die Geisteswissenschaft gerät in der postmodernen Beliebigkeit in doppelter Weise in die Krise: Indem das neue Werkzeug der Elektronik unvorstellbare Datenmengen zu erfassen und zu verarbeiten gestattet, bleibt das altertümliche, schlichte, anthropomorphe Verstehen auf der Strecke. Das Humboldtsche Ideal 'Alles Wissenswerte wissen—alles Gewußte verstehen' ist zur Unmöglichkeit geworden. Computer-Ergebnisse sind nur noch Computern zugänglich. Man kann Material mit Computern 'bearbeiten' und Ergebnisse destillieren, man kann Modelle miteinander konkurrieren lassen, aber kann man noch sinnvoll darüber sprechen? Zugleich aber scheint der Geisteswissenschaft der gemeinsame geistige, historisch-traditionelle Hintergrund abhanden gekommen. Mit der Aufgabe von traditionellen Verbindlichkeiten erscheinen nun die verschiedensten Interpretationen und Thesen gleichberechtigt nebeneinander zu stehen, gleich viel wert oder gleich subjektiv. Das 'Abendland' kriegt sein schlechtes Gewissen nicht mehr los. Es bleibt, frühere Interpretationen dekonstruierend auf ihre Subjektivität und ihre versteckte Ideologie hin zu entlarven. Die Phänomene verschwinden; 'Tatsachen' gibt es angeblich nicht mehr.

---

[41] L. Lütkehaus, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* 15/16.4.2000, 66.

Dies greift sogar über die Geisteswissenschaften hinaus. Berühmt geworden ist der Nonsense-Aufsatz von Alan Sokal, 'Transgressing the Boundaries. A Transformative Hermeneutics of Quantum Gravity', der 1996 in die Zeitschrift *Social Text* eingeschleust wurde:[42] 'Transformation' wie bei Chomsky und Lévi-Strauss, 'Hermeneutik' wie bei Gadamer, 'Quanten' wie bei Max Planck, 'Gravitation' eher nach Einstein—gängige Schlagworte halbverstandener Physik als bewußter Unsinn, der von den zuständigen Fachreferenten als solcher nicht mehr erkannt wurde. Mit Erleichterung konnte man anläßlich der Sonnenfinsternis im letzten Jahr feststellen, daß ein solches Phänomen doch offenbar nicht Begriffsbildung, Projektion oder Fiktion der westlich-kapitalistischen Gesellschaft ist, sondern ein irgendwie reales Ereignis. Es hielt sich sehr genau an die Vorausberechnungen. Aber das dauerte nur vier Minuten.[43]

Der Historiker kann sich immer als *laudator temporis acti* profilieren; dies bringt nichts. Trends getreulich mitzumachen, bringt wechselnden Gewinn. Nicht entbinden kann man sich von der Aufgabe, die intellektuellen Herausforderungen aufzunehmen, die auch in den Trends enthalten sind. Henk Versnel hat sich in seiner Weise den Herausforderungen gestellt, wie besonders die Einleitung zu seinen *Inconsistencies* zeigt.[44] Ich sträube mich eher gegen die Destruktion des Objektiven und möchte insbesondere die kritische Auflösung der Begriffe Mythos und Ritual, die etwa Marcel Detienne und Claude Calame eingeleitet haben,[45] nicht mitmachen. Vorsicht ist löblich, wir sollten die Kategorien der Überlieferung durchdenken, frühere Romantisierungen widerlegen, die gegenseitige Hermeneutik erweitern und verfeinern. Aber dies bedeutet nicht den Abbruch inhaltsbezogener Studien zum Mythos, zum Ritual und zu beidem.

Einer anderen Herausforderung suchte ich mich zu stellen, die seit mehr als 100 Jahren besteht, doch immer dringlicher wird, der Herausforderung der Geisteswissenschaften durch die Biologie. Die

---

[42] Vgl. Sokal-Bricmont 1999.
[43] Vgl. auch Burkert 2000.
[44] Versnel 1990, 1–35.
[45] Detienne 1981; Calame 1991.

Geisteswissenschaften, insbesondere die Soziologie, zeigen sich freilich zumeist von der gegenstrebigen Reaktion beherrscht, sie klagen gegen 'Reduktionismus' und verwenden beträchtliche Energien darauf, Biologisches fernzuhalten.[46] 'Progressive' Soziologen sind gegen die Aggressions-Theorie von Konrad Lorenz Sturm gelaufen; es gelang, Konrad Lorenz wegen falschen Zungenschlags in der Nazi-Zeit zur Unperson zu machen.[47] Dabei läuft der Fortschritt der Biologie dem interessierten Beobachter davon: Es ist schwer, neue Ergebnisse auch nur rezeptiv zur Kenntnis zu nehmen, ohne den halbverstandenen Sensationen der Medien anheimzufallen. Viel zu reden gibt zur Zeit die Genetik, doch geht es um die Fortschritte der Molekularbiologie insgesamt, die die Mechanismen des Lebens offenlegen.

Ein entscheidender Begriff, der weit über Details hinausgreift und Kulturwissenschaften durchaus affiziert, ist 'Selbstorganisation', im Gegensatz zu planendem Eingriff und zu direktem Kopieren. Die zentralen Auseinandersetzungen indes betreffen vor allem das, was traditionellerweise 'Seele' oder 'Geist' heißt: In der Gehirnforschung werden immer kompliziertere Details entdeckt, Antworten gegeben, wo wir uns über die Fragestellungen noch kaum einig sind; Immaterielles jedenfalls ist nicht zu entdecken. Soviel scheint klar: Zuversichtliche Verallgemeinerungen über 'das Menschliche', die *Homo Necans* auf den Bahnen von Meuli oder Lorenz noch riskiert, werden fast unmöglich; auch Sigmund Freuds Theorien erscheinen mehr und mehr als zeitbedingte Mythen.

Als Fortschritt, der die Dynamik sozialer Gruppen direkt betrifft, präsentiert sich ein neuer, Computer-gestützte Darwinismus, der die 'Gruppen-Selektion' durchaus bestreitet. Dies hat 1976 Richard Dawkins in seinem Buch *The Selfish Gene* gezeigt,[48] dessen Titel nicht zufällig zum Schlagwort geworden ist: Wenn irgendwo, so hat man hier den Reflex der aktuellen Gegenwart. Doch setzt dies seine Feststellungen nicht außer Kraft. Die 'Solidarität' der Gruppe als Richtwert, der Erfolg der Gruppen-Solidarität als Entwicklungsziel ist durchaus fraglich geworden. Der Egoismus des einzelnen triumphiert. Das Interesse der Biologen wendet sich denn auch seither, anders als bei Konrad Lorenz, eher dem Negativen zu: Nicht mehr von Tötungshemmungen im Sinn der Arterhaltung ist die Rede, sondern vom Vergewaltigen und vom Kinderfressen, oder zumindest von Lug und Trug als Zeichen von Intelligenz.

---

[46] Frei von Einseitigkeit ist Versnel, vgl. die Anerkennung von D'Aquili-Laughlin-McManus: Versnel 1993, 41 Anm. 69.

[47] Vgl., als Auseinandersetzung eines Lorenz-Schülers, Bischof 1991.

[48] Dawkins 1976; Burkert 1979 arbeitet noch auf funktionalistischer Basis, in der Nähe von Sozialdarwinismus.

Inmitten dieser Entwicklungen steht ein Ansatz zu einer neuen umfassenden Theorie, der 'Soziobiologie' von E.O. Wilson, als 'the new synthesis' schon 1975 vorgestellt und seither weiter verfolgt.[49] Sie scheint mit der Biologie die Geschichte zu vereinen, indem sie die 'gemeinsame Evolution von Genen und Kultur' in den Blick nimmt und ihre andauernde gegenseitige Wechselwirkung konstatiert. Kultur, die dem Leben so viel mehr sichere Chancen bietet, wirkt zugleich als Auslesefaktor. Kulturelle Regeln, in bestimmten Institutionen verankert, begründen eine neue Art von 'Fitness'. Wer sich ihnen am besten anpassen kann, hat zugleich die besten Chancen, sich fortzupflanzen; dadurch perpetuieren sich die Regeln. Kultureller Erfolg schlägt sich nieder als Fortpflanzungserfolg. In dieser Weise sollte die Entwicklung der Kultur und die Modifikation der Gene Hand in Hand gehen und Kultur entsprechend in die biologische Entwicklung eingebettet sein und bleiben. Von den veränderten Genen aus baut sich sozusagen ein neues Geleise auf, das das Verhalten in eine bestimmte Richtung lenkt.

Hierzu eine wenig erbauliche Überlegung: Wenn jede Generation mindestens einen Krieg hat und dabei diejenigen, die nicht hingehen, die Nicht-Aggressiven, von den Kampfwilligen konsequent umgebracht werden—und für solche Praxis gibt es Belege über mehr als 3000 Jahre hin—, muss das Folgen haben für den Menschentyp oder wenigstens seine maskuline Variante; doch auch die sich anpassenden Frauen werden den grösseren Fortpflanzungserfolg haben.[50] So wird Kultur zur Natur, die die kulturelle Wertung und das kulturelle Verhalten festschreibt. Dabei bezeichnet Wilson selbst die Religion als die größte Herausforderung der Soziobiologie.[51]

Daß Konzeptionen wie die von *Homo Necans* mit Wilsons Theorie sehr wohl kompatibel sind, auch nach der Korrektur der wegfallenden Gruppen-Selektion, scheint klar. Die Probleme liegen indes beim detaillierten Nachweis, bei der Verifizierbarkeit der Hypothesen über eine soziobiologische Entwicklung der Menschheit. Gerade mit der fortschreitenden Entschlüsselung des genetischen Codes wird immer deutlicher, wie schwierig die Brücken von der Genetik zum manifesten Verhalten festzumachen sind; und die Rückwirkung etwaigen 'Erfolgs' dürfte vielschichtig sein. Die Genese des Menschen in seiner Eigenart, in seiner Trennung vom Schimpansen dürfte sich auf mehr als 2 Millionen Jahre verteilen, für die nur äußerst spärliche Indizien vorliegen. Es gibt ein halbes Dutzend oder mehr Zwischenglieder, die alle ausgestorben sind—und das für 1 1/2 Prozent genetischer Veränderung. Der Schimpanse ist dem Menschen näher gerückt, durch Werkzeugherstellung, eine gewisse Sprachfähigkeit, auch durch Jagdverhalten—aber Riten, gar 'Schuldgefühle' im Jagen lassen sich nicht erkennen. Und wie steht es mit dem Neanderthaler, der neben dem 'modernen Menschen' existierte, ohne mit ihm direkt verwandt zu sein? Die Evolution wird komplizierter und bleibt doch dunkel. Schon die Frage, wann und wie sich Sprache entwickelt hat, bleibt vorläufig kontrovers.[52] Ich meine nach wie vor, daß in jenen Zeichensystemen, mit denen die Kulturwissenschaft es zu tun hat, bestimmte Vorzeichnungen, Bahnen, Programme angelegt sind, die auch in die Religion hineinführen. Es gibt da gestaltende Kräfte, 'Attraktoren', die in wiederholter Selbstorganisation sich manifestieren und damit eine gewisse Stabilität anthropologischer Psychologie bewirken,[53] behaupte aber nicht, definitive Beweise geliefert zu haben.

---

[49] Wilson 1975; 1978; 1983; Lumsden-Wilson 1981: mit dem Anspruch der umfassenden Synthese Wilson 1998.

[50] Vgl. Burkert 1998, 25f.

[51] Wilson 1978, 175, vgl. 169–93.

Dem Traum von der großen anthropologischen Theorie der Religion ist wohl eher zu entsagen. Eine Theorie haben heißt Voraussagen machen, sie bedeutet Einschränkung möglicher Erfahrung. Eher möchte ich auf Neues, Überraschendes gefaßt bleiben, und finde mich dabei in Übereinstimmung mit Henk Versnel, der Anthropologie 'polyparadigmatic' sein lassen möchte.[54] Dabei bin ich altmodisch genug, an Objektivität in Bezug auf die Gegenstände der Wissenschaft zu glauben, an Suchen und Finden, auch beim Historiker der Antike, auch beim Religionswissenschaftler.

Wichtig ist darum die schlichte Feststellung, daß auch in der Thematik von Mythos und Ritual immer wieder Neufunde den Fortschritt begleitet oder gar ausgelöst haben: Solche Funde waren die Inschrift von Palekastro für Jane Harrison, der Text über das babylonische Neujahrs-Ritual für Hooke, die Ugarit-Texte für Gaster, die Catal Hüyük-Ausgrabungen für *Homo Necans*, für die These von der Kontinuität zwischen Jägertum und agrarischer Kultur. Ich habe mich weiterhin vor allem um Erweiterung des Materials bemüht, besonders im orientalischen Bereich und in der Interaktion von Orientalischem und Griechischem.

---

[52] Vgl. Burkert 1998, 33–35.

[53] Burkert 1998.

[54] Versnel 1993, 86.

Ein Beispiel, das wohl noch wenig bekannt ist:[55] Der sumerische Mythos von der Stiftung des Opfers. Es handelt sich um einen Text über den sagenhaften König Lugalbanda, von dem verschiedene sumerische Texte erzählen. Unser Text ist erst 1983 veröffentlicht worden und mir 1996 bekannt geworden.[56] Die Erzählung läuft so:

Lugalbanda erkrankt auf einem Kriegszug, an dem er teilnimmt, und wird von seinen Kameraden in einer Höhle zurückgelassen, um zu sterben. Doch Lugalbanda betet zu den Göttern, und da wird er wieder gesund; der ihm hinterlassene Essensvorrat jedoch ist zu Ende. Was tun? Lugalbanda erfindet das Feuer neu, d.h. das Feuermachen mit Feuerstein, und er wird zum Jäger. Hier wird also angenommen, daß die Menschen vorher, 'ursprünglich', kein Fleisch gegessen haben. Lugalbanda gelingt es, mit Fallen ein Wildrind und zwei Ziegen einzufangen. Doch wie weiter? Hier greifen Götter ein. Ein Gott erscheint Lugalbanda im Traum und gibt ihm Anweisung zum Opferritual: Er muß die Tiere regelrecht schlachten, den Stier mit der Steinaxt, die Ziegen mit dem Messer, so daß ihr Blut in eine Grube rinnt. Lugalbanda erwacht noch vor Tagesanbruch, und er tut wie geheißen: Er erschlägt den Ochsen mit der Axt, er schlachtet die Ziegen, das Blut fließt, und so lädt Lugalbanda mit Tagesanbruch die vier großen Götter zu Tisch, Anu, Enlil, Enki und Ninhursag, neben der Grube, in die das Blut geflossen ist. Lugalbanda gießt Libationen von Bier und Wein aus, er schneidet und röstet das Fleisch, der Duft steigt empor als Wohlgeruch, und 'von der Speise, die Lugalbanda bereitete, verzehrten Anu, Enlil, Enki und Ninhursag die besten Teile.'

---

[55] Hinweis in Burkert 1999.

[56] Hallo 1983; 1996, 212–220; zu den zuvor bekannten Lugalbanda-Texten C. Wilcke, *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* VII (1987) 117–131.

Wir haben hier einen—zuvor unbekannten—mythischen Text, zugleich einen literarischen Text in der bei den Sumerern damals entwickelten Literatur, einen Text über das zentrale Ritual, das Opferritual. Wir finden Mythos und Ritual. Und ich denke, es ist kein *circulus vitiosus*, sondern ein Beispiel eines gelingenden interdisziplinären Dialogs, wenn der Erstherausgeber seinerseits auf *Homo Necans* verweist.[57] Es bleibt die Faszination der transkulturellen und überzeitlichen Entsprechungen. Übrigens gibt es auch im Alten Testament eine Traditionslinie, wonach die Menschen bis zur Sintflut vegetarisch gelebt haben. Nach der Sintflut, als Noah der Arche entsteigt, bringt er das Opfer dar—ebenso handeln die mesopotamischen Vorbilder Noahs, d.h. alle Sintfluthelden. Seit der Sintflut besteht das Opfer, das der Mensch vollzieht und zu dem die Götter—oder der Gott, Jahwe—eingeladen werden.[58] Man könnte auch die Parallelen zur Erfindung des Opfers im homerischen Hermes-Hymnos ausziehen und die Initiations-Motive herausstellen, parallel zu Bemerkungen Henk Versnels:[59] die 'Überlebensübung' als Initiation.

Wird sich Religion, wird sich Altertumswissenschaft, wird sich Religionswissenschaft des Altertums im neuen Jahrtausend behaupten? Der Historiker ist kein Prophet. Er kann mehr oder weniger grämlich feststellen, wie Neues oft dem Alten gleicht: Die neuen Mythen um Ufos und Star Wars z.B. enthalten kaum neue Elemente gegenüber Marduks Kampf gegen Tiamat. Wenn das computerisierte Internet vorzugsweise Vorlieben für aggressive Computer-Spiele und für Pornographie zu speisen scheint, so behaupten sich damit die Urstromtäler des Menschlichen, Sexualität und Aggression, Initiations- und die Opferthematik. Neue Rituale etwa der Popmusik erweisen sich als erstaunlich kulturübergreifend, instrumentieren aber wie seit je die 'initiatorische Krise' der Heranwachsenden und markieren vor allem Zugehörigkeit, 'in' und 'out'. Kritischer ist mir die Frage: Können wir die alten Lebensordnungen noch als mögliche Modelle humanen Lebens vorstellen und verlebendigen? Das Alte rückt immer ferner und wird mehr denn je unwiederholbar. Daß hier der Wind noch einmal umschlagen wird, ist nicht zu erwarten. Trotzdem meine ich, daß wir als Historiker der Religion nicht nur Ersatzbefriedigung bieten für archaisch gestimmte Seelen, nicht nur in den globalen Erlebnispark das eine oder andere Hexenhäuschen hineinstellen. Die immer noch geheimnisvolle Besonderheit des Menschen ist sein Selbstbewußtsein. Wir tragen in der historischen Dimension bei zu einer menschlich-geistigen Ganzheit, die weder in einen Darwinismus der 'Meme', von dem man auch schon gesprochen hat, noch in eine globale Vernetzung von Werbespots aufzulösen ist. Wenn man will: Wir sind bemüht um 'Humanismus'—auch wenn ich lieber griechisch von Anthropologie spreche.

---

[57] Hallo 1996, 212.

[58] Vgl. Burkert 1998, 28.

[59] Versnel 1993, 56.

BIBLIOGRAPHIE

ANET = Pritchard, J.B., ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton ^{3}1964).
Ackerman, R., *The Myth and Ritual School* (New York 1991).
Auffarth, Chr., *Der drohende Untergang. 'Schöpfung' in Mythos und Ritual im alten Orient und in Griechenland* (Berlin 1991).
Bischof, N., *Gescheiter als alle die Laffen. Ein Psychogramm von Konrad Lorenz* (Hamburg 1991).
Bleeker, C.J., Drewes, G.W.J., Hidding, K.A., ed., *Proceedings of the 7th Congress for the History of Religions* (Amsterdam 1951).
Brelich, A., *Paides e Parthenoi* I (Rom 1969).
Burkert, W., Kekropidensage und Arrhephoria. Vom Initiationsritus zum Panathenäenfest, *Hermes* 94 (1966) 175–200 (= Burkert 1966a).
——, Greek Tragedy and Sacrificial Ritual, *GRBS* 7 (1966) 87–121 (= Burkert 1966b).
——, *Homo Necans* (Berlin 1972; engl. Berkeley 1983).
——, *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual* (Berkeley 1979).
——, Griechische Mythologie und die Geistesgeschichte der Moderne, in: *Les Etudes classiques au XIX^e et XX^e siècles.* Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique 26 (Vandoeuvres-Genève 1980) 159–199.
——, Oriental and Greek Mythology: The Meeting of Parallels, in: J. Bremmer (ed.), *Interpretations of Greek Mythology* (London 1987) 10–40.
——, Der Mensch, der tötet, in: H. Ritter (Hrsg.), *Werkbesichtigung Geisteswissenschaften* (Frankfurt 1990) 185–193.
——, Mythos. Begriff, Struktur, Funktionen, in: F. Graf (Hrsg.), *Mythen in mythenloser Gesellschaft* (Colloquium Rauricum 3) (Stuttgart 1993) 9–24.
——, Aggression und Behagen: Die heiligen Schauer des Essens, in: A. Keck, I. Kording, A. Prochaska (Hrsg.), *Verschlungene Grenzen. Anthropophagie in Literatur und Kulturwissenschaften* (Tübingen 1999) 243–256.
——, *Kulte des Alterums: Biologische Grundlagen der Religion* (München 1998).
——, Revealing Nature Amidst Multiple Cultures. A Discourse with Ancient Greeks, in: *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values* 21 (2000) 125–151.
Calame, C., *Illusions de la mythologie* (Limoges 1991).
——, 'Mythe' et 'Rite' en Grèce: Des Catégories indigènes? *Kernos* 4 (1991) 179–204.
Chirassi, I., *Elementi di culture precereali nei miti e riti greci* (Rom 1969).
Cornford, F.M., The Origin of the Olympic Games, in: Harrison 1912, 212–259.
——, A Ritual Basis for Hesiod's Theogony, in: F.M. Cornford, *The Unwritten Philosophy and Other Essays*, ed. with an introductory memoir by W.K.C. Guthrie (Cambridge 1950) 95–116.

D'Aquili, E.G., Laughlin, Ch.D., McManus, J., *The Spectrum of Ritual. A Biogenetic Analysis* (New York 1976).

Dawkins, T., *The Selfish Gene* (Oxford 1976).

Detienne, M., *Les Jardins d'Adonis* (Paris 1972).

——, *Dionysos mis à mort* (Paris 1977).

——, *L'invention de la mythologie* (Paris 1981).

Deubner, L., *Attische Feste* (Berlin 1932).

Dieterlen, G., La cosmogonie des Dogon et les cérémonies soixantenaires du Sigui, *Cahiers internationaux de symbolisme* 35–36 (1978) 175–185.

Dodds, E.R., *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley 1951).

Evans, A., Mycenaean Tree and Pillar Cult, *JHS* 21 (1901) 99–204.

Farnell, L.R., *The Cults of the Greek States* I (Oxford 1896).

Fontenrose, J., *The Ritual Theory of Myth* (Berkeley 1971).

Gaster, Th.H., *Thespis. Ritual, Myth and Drama in the Ancient Near East* (Garden City 1950; ^{2}1961).

——, *The New Golden Bough* (London 1959).

van Gennep, A., *Les rites de passage* (Paris 1909; 1981). dt. *Übergangsriten* (Frankfurt 1986); engl. *The rites of Passage* (London 1960).

Gernet, L., *Anthropologie de la Grèce antique* (Paris 1968).

Graf, F., Milch, Honig und Wein. Zum Verständnis der Libation im griechischen Ritual, in: *Perennitas. Studi in onore di A. Brelich* (Rom 1981) 209–221.

——, *Griechische Mythologie* (München/Zürich 1985, ^{3}1991).

Griaule, M., *Masques Dogon* (Paris 1938).

Hallo, W.W., Lugalbanda Excavated, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 103 (1983) 165–180.

——, *Origins. The Ancient Near Eastern Background of Some Modern Western Institutions* (Leiden 1996).

Harrison, J., *Mythology and Monuments of Ancient Athens* (London 1890).

——, *Themis. A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion* (Cambridge 1912, ^{2}1927).

Hooke, S.H., ed., *Myth and Ritual. Essays on the Myth and Ritual of the Hebrews in Relation to the Culture Pattern of the Ancient Near East* (Oxford 1933).

——, *Myth, Ritual, and Kingship* (Oxford 1958).

Jeanmaire, H., *Couroi et Courètes* (Lille 1939).

Jensen, A.E., *Hainuwele. Volkserzählungen von der Molukkeninsel Ceram* (Frankfurt 1939).

Jung, C.G., Kerényi, K. *Einführung in das Wesen der Mythologie. Gottkindmythos, Eleusinsiche Mysterien* (Amsterdam, Zürich 1941).

Kirk, G.S., *Myth. Its Meaning and Functions in Ancient and Other Cultures* (Berkeley 1970).

Kluckhohn, C., Myths and Rituals. A General Theory, *Harvard Theological Review* 35 (1942) 45–79.

Krummen, E., *Pyrsos Hymnon: Festliche Gegenwart und mythisch-rituelle Tradition als Voraussetzung einer Pindarinterpretation* (Berlin 1990).

Leach, E.R., *The Political Systems of Highland Burma* (London 1954).

Lévi-Strauss, C., The Structural Study of Myth, *Journal of American Folklore* 68 (1955) 428–44; franz. in: *Anthropologie Structurale* (Paris 1958) 227–255; dt. in: *Strukturale Anthropologie* (Frankfurt 1967) 266–254.

——, *Mythologiques* I–IV (Paris 1964–1971), dt.: *Mythologica* (Frankfurt 1971–1975).

Lorenz, K., *Das sogenannte Böse. Zur Naturgeschichte der Aggression* (Wien 1963).

——, *Die acht Todsünden der zivilisierten Menschheit* (München ^{2}1973).

Lumsden, C.J., Wilson, E.O., *Genes, Mind, and Culture. The Coevolutionary Process* (Cambridge, Mass. 1981).

Malinowski, B., *Myth in Primitive Psychology* (London 1926).

——, *Magic, Science and Religion* (Garden City 1954).

Merkelbach, R., *Roman und Mysterium in der Antike* (München 1962).

——, *Isis regina—Zeus Sarapis* (Stuttgart 1995).

Meuli, K., Scythica, *Hermes* 70 (1935) 121–176 = *Gesammelte Schriften* (Basel 1975) 817–879.

——, Griechische Opferbräuche, in: O. Gigon, K. Meuli, W. Theiler (Hrsg.), *Phyllobolia für Peter Von der Mühll zum 60. Geburtstag* (Basel 1946) 185–288 = *Gesammelte Schriften* 907–1021.

Moor, J.C. de, *An Anthology of Religious Texts from Ugarit* (Leiden 1987).

Mowinckel, S., *Religion und Kultus* (Göttingen 1953).

Murray, G., Excursus on the Ritual Forms preserved in Greek Tragedy, in Harrison 1912, 341–363.

Nilsson, M.P., *Cults Myths, Oracles, and Politics in Ancient Greece* (Lund 1951).

Propp, V., *Morphology of the Folktale* (Bloomington 1958), dt. *Morphologie des Märchens* (München ^{2}1975); urspr. russisch (Leningrad 1928).

Robert, C., *Oidipus* (Berlin 1915).

Rose, H.J., Myth and Ritual in Classical Civilization, *Mnemosyne* 3 (1950) 281–287.

Smith, J.Z., *Map is not Territory* (Leiden 1978).

Sokal, A., Bricmont, J., *Eleganter Unsinn. Wie die Denker der Postmoderne die Wissenschaften mißbrauchen* (München 1999).

Steiner, G., *Der Sukzessionsmythos in Hesiods Theogonie und ihren orientalischen Parallelen* (Diss. Hamburg 1959).

Thomson, G., *Studies in Ancient Greek Society. The Prehistoric Aegean* (London 1949).

Thureau-Dangin, F., *Rituels accadiens* (Paris 1921).

Versnel, H.S., *Triumphus. An Inquiry into the Origin, Development and Meaning of the Roman Triumph* (Leiden 1970).

——, *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion, I. Ter Unus. Isis, Dionysos, Hermes: Three Studies in Henotheism* (Studies in Greek and Roman Religion 6, I, Leiden 1990, ^{2}1998).

——, *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion, II. Transition and Reversal in Myth and Ritual* (Studies in Greek and Roman Religion 6, II, Leiden 1993, ^{2}1994); darin 15–88: What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander: Myth and Ritual, old and new; urspr. in L. Edmunds (ed.), *Approaches to Greek Myth* (Baltimore 1990) 25–90.

Webster, T.B.L., Some thoughts on the prehistory of Greek drama, *BICS* 5 (1958) 43–48.

Wilson, E.O., *Sociobiology. The New Synthesis* (Cambridge, Mass. 1975).

——, *On Human Nature* (Cambridge, Mass. 1978).

——, *Promethean Fire. Reflections on the Origin of Mind* (Cambridge, Mass. 1983).

——, *Consilience. The Unity of Knowledge* (New York 1998), dt. *Die Einheit des Wissens* (München 1999).

RITUAL DYNAMICS:
THE BOIOTIAN FESTIVAL OF THE DAIDALA

Angelos Chaniotis

1. *Sources and puzzles*

In Turkish folkore Nasreddin Hoca is a representative of popular wisdom; his stories are well-known in Greece as well. One of them goes as follows: Nasreddin Hoca had been appointed as a judge in a dispute between two men. After the plaintiff had presented his case, Nasreddin Hoca looked at him and said: 'You are right'. Then it was the defendant's turn to present his argument and, again, Hoca's response was the same: 'You are right'. Thereupon one of the onlookers at the trial turned to Hoca and said: 'You are the judge; you have to pass a judgment now'. Hoca looked at him calmly and answered: 'You are right, too'. Whenever I heard this story as a child, I laughed, but at the same time I was puzzled about its meaning. I still am, but I can not help thinking of this story whenever I read different interpretations of the same Greek festival. Of course, not everyone is right, but there is hardly any study which does not offer a new interesting insight. I also could not help thinking of Hoca's story again, when I read the jacket of the second volume of the *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion.* There, Henk Versnel expresses his conviction 'that the three approaches to religion known as "substantivistic", functionalist and cultural-symbolic respectively, need not be mutually exclusive.'

If I have chosen such a puzzling festival as the Daidala for this paper in honor of Henk Versnel, it is because I think that it presents an interesting case of a ritual, in the study of which different interpretative approaches are not mutually exclusive or contradictory, but complementary. John Ma (1994) has demonstrated this in a very witty way in his *Black Hunter Variations*, and Versnel himself has offered an illuminative example with his analysis of the Thesmophoria (1994, 228–288). At the same time the Daidala, with their long and complicated history, point to one of the reasons why different approaches in the study of Greek festivals are not only legitimate, but indeed necessary. Festivals known primarily or exclusively from late sources are the result of the natural and unavoidable tensions and conflicts between an inherently conservative element on the one hand and a very dynamic element on the other: between ritual actions, which have to be performed in a particular way, and the continually changing community of performers, participants, and receptors or spectators.

The earliest literary references to the Daidala date from the Imperial period.[1] A fragment of Plutarch's treatise on this festival (*Peri ton en Plataiais Daidalon*) gives us two versions of the aetiological myth. A third version, but also a description of the (allegedly heptaeteric, but possibly annual) Small Daidala at Plataiai and the Pamboiotian Great Daidala (which were allegedly celebrated every sixty years) is given by Pausanias.[2] I have summarized the two reports (see appendix) on the following table:

Plutarch I	Plutarch II	Pausanias	Festival
	quarrel between Hera and Zeus	quarrel between Hera and Zeus	
abduction of Hera from *Euboia*	Hera hides in Kithairon	Hera hides in *Euboia*	
hieros gamos in Mt. Kithairon			
Makris looks for Hera, deception by *Kithairon*	advise of *Alalkomenes*	advise of *Kithairon*	selection of an oak at *Alalkomenai*
	construction of a wooden image (Daidale)	construction of a wooden image (Plataia, daughter of *Asopos*)	construction of 14 wooden images (*daidala*)
			distribution of the daidala among the *Boiotian* cities
	decoration of the image	decoration of the image	decoration of the image
	nuptial bath (Tritonides)		nuptial bath at *Asopos*

---

[1] For possible earlier iconographical sources see Simon 1972; Avagianou 1991, 64f.

[2] On the problems of the periodos of the festival see Nilsson 1906, 50f.; Kirsten 1950, 2320; Schachter 1981, 249f.; Prandi 1983, 84 and 89–91.

(table cont.)

Plutarch I	Plutarch II	Pausanias	Festival
	wedding song, music, and komos	chariot	chariot
	Hera's wrath	Hera's wrath	the sequence of the poleis is determined by lot
	Hera comes to Plataia followed by women	Hera comes to Plataia	procession to the top of Mt. Kithairon
	Hera recognizes the deception	Hera recognizes the deception	
	laughter and joy	joy	
	reconciliation	reconciliation	reconciliation of Thebes and Plataia
	wedding procession		
Hera Teleia, Gamelios	Hera Nymphagogos	Hera Teleia, Nympheuomene	
			construction of an altar
			sacrifice of cows and oxen
	burning of Daidale		burning of the *daidala*

The aetiological myths were meant to explain why Hera was worshipped as 'the marrying one' (Nympheuomene) and as the patron of marriage (Teleia and Gamelios). But only the first of the two myths narrated by Plutarch offers an explanation: when Hera was abducted by Zeus from Euboia, Kithairon provided them shelter and deceived Hera's nurse, telling her that Zeus was hiding there with Leto. The wedding of Zeus and Hera became known and then Hera was worshipped as Teleia and Gamelios. The problem is that this version does not seem to be related—at least not directly—to the Daidala. The two other versions are connected with the Daidala, but they narrate the quarrel and reconciliation of Hera and Zeus, not their wedding; a connection with the wedding of Hera can be established, only if one presupposes an interdependence of the motifs of virginity, wedding, and separation in the myths of Hera—a suggestion made by M. Jost in the light of the myths of Hera in Boiotia and Arkadia (Hera Pais, Teleia, Chera).[3] Many scholars have pointed out that the ritual described by Pausanias has several features of a wedding ceremony: the decoration of a wooden image as a bride, the nuptial bath, a nympheutria, the wedding procession, the singing of wedding songs.[4] And yet, the wooden image which represents a bride does not end up on the nuptial bed, but on the pyre; in addition to this, all the sources make clear that the wooden image did not represent Hera, as one would expect in the case of a *hieros gamos*, but either Plataia or Daidale.[5] These are but a few of the problems which made M.P. Nilsson call the Daidala the strangest festival of Hera.[6] But even this statement is not free of problems, since it implies that the Daidala was in fact a festival of Hera.

Amongst the many studies on the Daidala[7] one recognizes, basically, two approaches: one of these places the ritual of the *hieros gamos* in the foreground; many scholars who have followed this approach regard the festival as described by Pausanias as a unity, offering different explanations for the obvious discrepancies between the Daidala and what one can expect from a celebration of a sacred wedding.[8] The second approach recognizes the heterogeneity of the details described by Pausanias, but then focuses on the construction and burning of the wooden image or images, investing this ritual with a variety of meanings which range from the idea of an annual fire expressing the rejuvenation of nature to the appeasement of a mighty chthonic goddess.[9] In recent research, almost all scholars agree that the rituals which were celebrated in the Imperial period present the result of amalgamations and artificial transformations, often under the influence of political factors,[10] although there is no agreement in the efforts to trace the different origins of these components.[11] The following brief review of the most influential studies is more than mere doxography; I hope that it will be an instructive demonstration of the value of different approaches and of the problems of 'unitarian' interpretations, but also of the necessity to take into consideration the dynamic nature of rituals.

---

[3] Jost 1997; see already Wilamowitz 1931, I 238.

[4] See, e.g., Nilsson 1906, 51f.; Kern 1926, 67; Kirsten 1950, 2321; Frontisi-Ducroux 1975, 203f.; Avagianou 1991, 60–62; Clark 1998, 23.

[5] Nilsson 1906, 52–54; cf. most recently Pötscher 1987, 57f.; Jost 1997, 91; Clark 1998, 24f.; cf. Kerényi 1972, 114f., who thought, however, that originally the image represented Hera. On the contrary, Simon 1980, 59, maintains that the daidala carried in procession to Mt. Kithairon were in fact images of Hera.

[6] Nilsson 1906, 50: 'das merkwürdigste Herafest'.

[7] I give a selection of the most influential and the most recent studies, in which one may find further bibliography: Farnell 1896, 189f.; Nilsson 1906, 50–56; Kern 1926, 66–68; Wilamowitz 1931, I 239–242; Meuli 1946, 209–211; Kirsten 1950, 2321–2325; Jacoby 1955, 182f.; Sümeghy 1961; Nilsson 1967, 130f., 431; Kerényi 1972, 114–118; Simon 1972, 210–214; Frontisi-Ducroux 1975, 193–216; Burkert 1979, 132–134; Furley 1981, 201–210; Schachter 1981, 245–250; Prandi 1983; Pötscher 1987, 50–65; Burkert 1988; Loucas-Durie 1988, 155f.; Avagianou 1991, 59–68; Jost 1997; Simon 1997; Clark 1998, 22–26. The PhD dissertation of H. Bacon Soulé, *The Cults of Plataea and the Daedala* (Univ. of California, Berkeley 1941) has not been accessible to me; Bacon Soulé interpreted the Daidala as a celebration of the union of the goddess of the moon with the god of the sky (see Frontisi-Ducroux 1975, 198f.).

[8] See, in particular, Farnell 1896, 189f.; Kirsten 1950, 2321–2325; Sümeghy 1961, 129; Kerényi 1972, 114; Furley 1981, 203–210; Avagianou 1991, 59–68; Clark 1998, 24f. Cf., more differentiated, Nilsson 1906, 51–55.

2. *The Daidala as a* hieros gamos

One strand of scholarship regards the Daidala as the ritual enactment of a sacred marriage, and, as already mentioned, it is difficult to deny the existence of such an element. The followers of this interpretation suggest, quite plausibly, that the protagonists of this *hieros gamos* were two deities of fertility, a god of the sky and an earth goddess that were later identified with Zeus and Hera. The problems begin, however, when one attempts to associate the holocaust with the sacred marriage. According to E. Kirsten (1950, 2322) the pyre is a necessary element of Zeus' epiphany, although he was unable to provide any parallels for this element in other festivals of Zeus. For W. Furley the great pyre on the top of the Kithairon *is* the wedding of the god of thunder with a goddess (Plataia/Daidale); the large altar recalls the construction of a building; it represents the oikos which one expects in a wedding; Furley recognized a parallel in the burning of Semele.[12] A. Avagianou (1991, 64–67) suggested, independently, that Semele was in fact Zeus' original bride: a chthonic goddess whose name possibly means 'earth' and whose grave was located on Mt. Kithairon.[13] I very much doubt whether Semele's burning should be regarded as a conclusive parallel. Besides the fact that none of our sources refers to her (Jost 1997, 91), no sources indicate that her burning occurred during her first encounter with Zeus as a virgin; on the contrary, all the explicit sources assert that Semele's death occurred during her pregnancy.[14] Thus, her death by burning cannot be perceived as the bride's consumption by fire, i.e., as a sacred marriage. There is a second difficulty; if Hera substituted Semele as the bride, then it is *her* image that one needs in the ritual enactment of the *hieros gamos*. But the *daidala* are clearly not images of Hera (see note 5)—and besides, the burning of images representing Olympian gods would be unparalleled in Greek festivals (Frontisi-Ducroux 1975, 207). It is for this reason that I. Clark (1998, 24f.) suggested that there is a missing section in Pausanias' description of the ritual and that, at some point, the false bride was ousted and her role as a bride was taken over by Hera; the wooden images were destroyed in an act of propitiation for Hera; this attractive suggestion cannot be proven. F. Frontisi-Ducroux, who has contributed one of the most intriguing studies of the Daidala, regarded the construction and the burning of the Daidala as integral part of the motif of deceit, which often accompanies narratives of sacred weddings (1975, 213–215). Still, this illuminative observation does not explain the treatment of the *daidala* as sacrificial objects.

---

[9] See, e.g., Nilsson 1906, 50–56; Meuli 1946, 209–211; Schachter 1981, 247; Burkert 1988.

[10] Kerényi 1972, 114; Frontisi-Ducroux 1975, 199, 204; Schachter 1981, 248–250; Prandi 1983; cf. Furley 1981, 206 and 209; Clark 1998, 25.

[11] See esp. Furley 1981, 206–210; Schachter 1981, 245; Prandi 1983, 86f.; Kossatz-Deissmann 1988, 666; Jost 1997, 91f.; Clark 1998, 25. A characteristic example is E. Simon. Based on Meuli (1946, 209–211) she suggested (1972, 210) that rituals for a chthonic goddess were re-interpreted when Hera became the Olympian consort of Zeus (cf. Kossatz-Deissmann 1988, 666); later she postulated a conflation of two different perceptions of Hera: an 'Achaean' Hera, patron of marriage, and a 'Pelasgian/Aeolian' Hera, a great mother goddess (Simon 1997).

[12] Furley 1981, 207. Cf. Farnell 1896, 190; Schachter 1981, 245.

Although this approach, which underlines the unity of the festival, fails to offer a satisfactory explanation of the Daidala's complex character, there can be little doubt that a *hieros gamos* was one of the festival's components;[15] one can also not ignore the fact that the cultic epithets of Hera (esp. the epithet Nympheuomene) underline her role not just as a patroness of marriage, but in fact as a bride. We may even go a step further and suggest that in an early period a wooden image played some part in a ritual enactment and celebration of the sacred wedding of Zeus and Hera. The *hieros gamos* of Zeus and Hera was celebrated in many Greek cities.[16] The ritual enactment of the wedding of Zeus and Hera is explicitly attested for Knossos, where it was celebrated near the river Theren, but we have no further information concerning the use of an image.[17] But a wooden statue was the focal point of a celebration of Hera's wedding at the festival of the Heraia (rather than at the festival of the Tonaia) in Samos.[18] On Kos we know the ritual *dendrokopion tes Heras* ('the cutting of a tree for Hera'); we do not know why a tree was cut for Hera, but it may have been used for the making of her image.[19] Closer to Plataiai, in Thespiai, an image of Hera Kithaironia was a 'tree trunk', a *premnon*,[20] and E. Simon has suggested that the clay statuettes of a seated or standing goddess with a body like a plank of wood found in Boiotia are representations of wooden *daidala* of Hera.[21] In Argos the priestess of Hera was brought on a chariot to the Heraion, probably as a *nympheutria* in Hera's wedding, rather than representing the goddes; Hera was possibly represented by an image (or an uniconical representation); on the right hand side of the pronaos of the Heraion stood a bed (*kline*), most probably one of the paraphernalia for her sacred wedding with Zeus.[22] It goes without saying that the images were not burned on these occasions.

---

[13] Not only Semele has been associated with the Earth goddess, but also Plataia ('the wide one', i.e., the earth): see, e.g., Burkert 1979, 133; Pötscher 1987, 63. The Indian parallels of marriage through fire, mentioned by Avagianou, are not very helpful.

[14] Apollodoros 3.4.3; Ovidius, *Metam.* 3.253–309, esp. 260f.; cf. the iconographical sources in Kossatz-Deissmann 1994, esp. 725.

[15] Cf. Frontisi-Ducroux 1975, 203f.; Prandi 1983, 86f.

3. *The Daidala as a fire ritual of fertility*

A far more influential approach has its origins in Mannhardt's *Baumkultus der Germanen* and Frazer's *Golden Bough*. It associates the Daidala with the spring and mid-summer bonfire festivals of modern Europe

---

[16] The most detailed treatment of the subject is given by Avagianou 1991, 27–73; cf. Simon 1972, 213f. and 1997, 84f.; Jost 1997, 88; Clark 1998. For the motif of the hieros gamos in the iconography of Hera see Kossatz-Deissmann 1988, 683–685; Avagianou 1991, 75–112.

[17] Diodoros 5.72.4; cf. Avagianou 1991, 71–73; Chaniotis 1992, 87.

[18] Avagianou 1991, 46–58, esp. 54–58 (with the earlier bibliography). A decisive piece of evidence is the information of Varro (apud Lactantius, *Inst.* 1.17.8) that a statue of Hera in Samos was dressed with a wedding dress.

[19] Nilsson 1906, 61, with reference to the source. Nilsson thought, however, that the dendrokopion was related to the cult of Hera as a goddess of vegetation.

[20] Clemens Alexandrinus, *Protr.* 3.46.3; cf. Nilsson 1906, 53; Schachter 1981, 251.

[21] Simon 1972, 210–218; Simon 1980, 58f.; cf. Schachter 1981, 244; Prandi 1983, 91f.; for criticism see Pötscher 1987, 50–57.

[22] Pausanias 2.17.3; Avagianou 1991, 36–45, esp. 41–43; Simon 1997, 84.

(of the Maypole or Johannesfeuer-type), at which a wood-en image is brought to the settlement and burned. According to J.G. Frazer's interpretation, the Daidala represent the marriage of powers of vegetation (Frazer 1913, 140f.); Hera's retirement is a mythical expression for a bad season and the failure of crops. M.P. Nilsson speculated that the image which was burned represented a demon of vegetation that had to go through fire in order to secure the warmth of the sun for everything that lives and grows; since this fire ritual intented to promote fertility it was understood as a wedding; Hera was associated with this festival at a late stage, as the goddess of marriage; the discrepancies in the myths and the rituals reflect the late conflation of two separate festivals, a fire festival and a festival of Hera.[23] The prominent position of a holocaust offering at two festivals of Artemis, the Laphria and the Elaphebolia, has led A. Schachter to the assumption that, similarly, the burning of the images at the Daidala was originally dedicated to Artemis and at some later point connected with the cult of Hera; for 'it would need little special pleading to combine with the worship of the patroness of marriage that of the patroness of childbirth.'[24] But the similarity between the Daidala on the one hand and the Laphria and the Elaphebolia on the other is rather superficial (Jost 1997, 91); the burning of slaughtered sacrificial victims at the Daidala cannot be compared with the throwing of living animals into the pyre at the Laphria. In addition to this, I can see no evidence for the assumption that in the holocausts of the Laphria and the Elaphebolia Artemis was conceived as the patroness of childbirth; and of course, there is no evidence for the sacrificial burning of wooden images in these festivals of Artemis (cf. below).

W. Burkert's interpretation along the same lines presents the most significant progress in the interpretation of the Daidala in recent years.[25] In the light of some ancient parallels he has attributed the Daidala to a category of festivals and Oriental myths the common theme of which is the departure and return of a goddess of fertility. Burkert recognized an ancient Greek parallel in a representation on a pithos of the 9th cent. BC found at Knossos (Fig. 1). A winged goddess, richly dressed and with a high polos, stands on a chariot.[26] She is represented in two different ways in two panels on the two opposite sides of the pithos. In the one panel (Fig. 1a) the goddess raises her hands on which two birds are seated. On the other panel (Fig. 1b) the goddess has dropped her arms, her wings are lowered, the birds fly away. The trees in the first representation blossom, the trees on the other side do not. According to Burkert's plausible interpretation, the two panels are connected with a festival of the coming and the departure of the great goddess of fertility; the chariot implies that an image of the goddess was brought into the city. There are indeed obvious analogies to the myths and the ritual of the Daidala: the departure of an (angry) goddess and her return, the carrying of an image on a chariot. But there are also obvious differences: the representation from Knossos is the image of a goddess; the wooden *daidala* were not; the *daidala* were burned; and there is no indication that the image on the Knossian pithos is that of a bride.

---

[23] Nilsson 1906, 54f.; Nilsson 1967, 130f., 431; cf. Nilsson 1923, 144; Kern 1926, 66–68. Cf. the extremely confusing remarks of Kirsten 1950, 2322f.

[24] Schachter 1981, 247. Already Meuli (1946, 209) had associated the Daidala with the Laphria, but as examples of chthonic sacrifices. But see Frontisi-Ducroux 1975, 205–207.

[25] Burkert 1988; cf. Burkert 1979, 132–134; 1985, 63.

Another parallel was recognized by Burkert in the report of Firmicus Maternus concerning a festival of Persephone (*Err. prof. rel.* 27.2). A tree was cut and was used for the construction of the image of a maiden, which was then brought to the city; there, it was mourned for forty days; on the evening of the fortieth day, the image was burned. This ritual is supposed to reflect the annual cycle of nature. The joy at the coming of the goddess was followed by the sadness at her departure in the fall. Again, the differences from the Daidala are no less striking than the similarities. Persephone's periodical death finds no analogy in any known cult of Hera; the wooden *daidala* were not brought to the city, they were not mourned, and they were not supposed to represent the periodical death of a virgin. Ailianos (*NA* 4.2; *VH* 1.15) and Athenaios (394 b) have reports of a similar festival at Eryx, this time for Aphrodite—the festival Anagogia. It owed its name to the departure of Aphrodite, who was supposed to leave for Africa, followed by birds (pigeons). Nine days later a very beautiful pigeon was seen coming from the south, and its coming was celebrated as the festival Katagogia. We observe, however, that

---

[26] For the motif of the goddess on the chariot cf. already Sümeghy 1961.

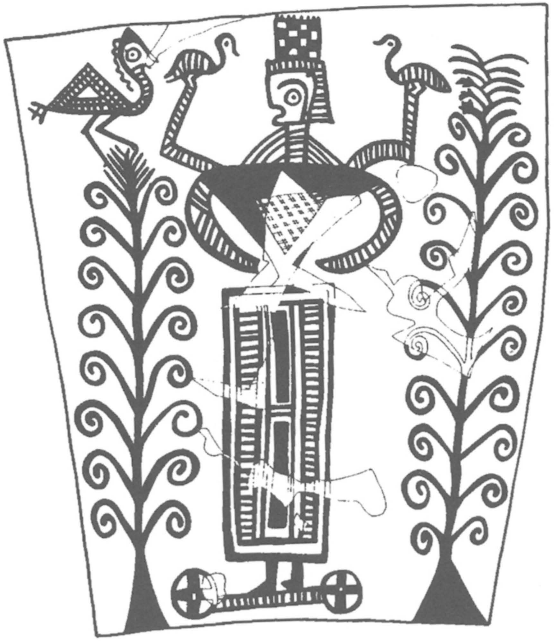


Fig. 1a

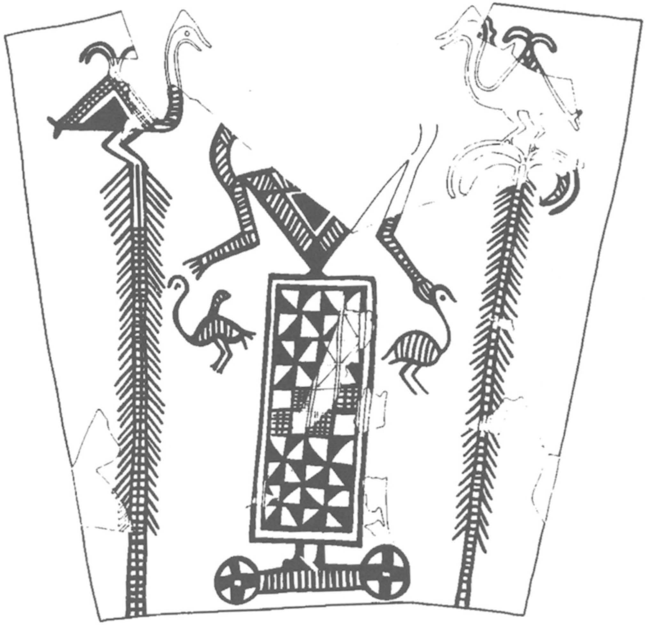


Fig. 1b

in this festival there is no image, no marriage, no pyre. Burkert suggested associating this group of festivals with mankind's primordial fears: Threatened by draught, bad harvests, infertility and bad weather, people leave from time to time the area of agricultural activity and return to the forest, where they used to find food at the stage of hunters and food collectors. The burning of an image may be a survival of the great pyres on peak sanctuaries in Minoan Crete; Burkert also observed that the Linear B texts of Knossos mention a *Daidaleion*. Despite the fact that the affinity between the Daidala and the fire rituals of Minoan Crete can only be a matter of speculation and although we do not know if the Knossian *daidaleion* was a sanctuary of Daidalos/Daidale or a place where *daidala* were kept, nevertheless, Burkert's assumption of a very old origin of the Boiotian Daidala seems quite probable. The role of Euboia in the aetiological myth seems to reflect a very early tradition, since the period of the Linear B texts of Thebes in the Late Bronze Age is the historical period in which Euboia was most closely associated with Boiotia.[27] Burkert's observations offer a conclusive explanation for the representation on the Knossian pithos and make clear that there existed a group of festivals celebrating the periodical departure and return of a goddess of fertility. Some elements of the Daidala have a close correspondence to this category of festivals, others do not.

4. *The Daidala as a sacrifice*

Modern research has not only isolated these two important components of the Daidala—the sacred marriage and the fire ritual; it has also pointed out that the burning of the Daidala can be conceived of as a sacrifice, and this is a very important element which is difficult to reconcile with the other two approaches. K. Meuli has assigned the sacrifice of the Daidala to the category of the 'chthonische Vernichtungsopfer', i.e., sacrifices offered to chthonic deities whose dangerous power should be appeased; the myth about the quarrel between Hera and Zeus and the goddess' withdrawal can be associated with this interpretation,[28] which, however, fails to explain other components of the ritual in the Imperial period (especially the allusions to a wedding). The fact that the daidala cannot be conceived as divine images led E. Loucas-Durie to the assumption that their burning was the substitute of a human sacrifice, which may have constituted a central part of the ritual in its early phase.[29] In this context one should also mention a suggestion made by W. Pötscher (1987, 60): the *daidala* may have represented harmful powers and their expulsion from the city (which is, however, not mentioned in any source), their transportation to the mountain and their destruction aimed at removing harmful powers and pollution. The offering of an expiatory sacrifice can be plausibly brought into connection with agrarian rituals and with the hope of appeasing a mighty goddess and securing the fertility of the crops and the animals;[30] such an expiatory character could also explain the irregular intervals in the celebration of the festival.

---

[27] For Euboian place names in the Mycenean texts from Thebes see Aravantinos 1987. For the early origin of the Daidala cf. Simon 1997, 85, who postulates a hieros gamos of Zeus and Hera as 'une sorte de dogme de la religion mycénienne'.

[28] Meuli 1946, 209f. Followed by Kossatz-Deissmann 1988, 666.

Not unlike the two other interpretations, the understanding of the Daidala as a sacrifice—and more specifically, as an expiatory sacrifice—does not explain all the details of the aetiological myths and their rituals; in particular, it is hard to explain how an expiatory sacrifice was transformed into a festival of Hera and how elements which recall a sacred marriage were introduced into this celebration. And yet, I think that there can be little doubt that an expiatory sacrifice was one of the components of the Daidala. Besides the fact that holocaust sacrifices often possess the character of expiatory sacrifices (e.g., Stengel 1910, 92–101), the construction and the treatment of the *daidala* recalls the selection and treatment of sacrificial animals. The Plataians cooked meat—Pausanias' vocabulary implies that it was the meat of sacrificed animals (μοίρας κρεῶν ἑφθῶν; cf. Frontisi-Ducroux 1975, 201 note 20)—and put it near a grove at Alalkomenai; priests or other officials waited there and observed the raven that would take this piece of meat. The tree where the bird came to rest was selected for the construction of the wooden image. This procedure seems at first sight to be a case of *oionoskopia*,[31] but a closer look reveals its similarities with the selection of a sacrificial animal. A well-known procedure is the one described by Theophrastos (apud Porphyrios, *Abst.* 2.28–30) with regard to the festival of the Dipolieia (Burkert 1983, 137f.). A group of oxen was driven up on the Acropolis, where a cake (*pelanos*) was placed on a table; the ox which first ate the grain cake was sacrificed. In both cases specially prepared food was used as bait, with the help of which one selected the ox which would be sacrificed or the tree which would be used for the making of a *daidalon*. We may follow the parallelism one step further. The sacrificial animal is expected to excel in beauty and size.[32] In the case of Daidala, the selection takes place in the grove with the highest oaks (μέγιστα στελέχη δρυῶν); Plutarch designates the tree from which the first *daidalon* was made as πανκάλην δρῦν ('a most beautiful oak'), using an expression which recalls the designation of sacrifical animals (*kallisteia*, cf. *kallhierein*).[33] Finally, the *daidalon* shares the same destiny with a sacrificial animal. It is not a cult statue, it is not even supposed to represent a goddess. It is washed and adorned in order to be burned on an altar. The *daidala* were sacrificed (καθαγίζουσιν ἐπὶ τοῦ βωμοῦ in Pausanias' words). One is tempted to see here a sacrifice of propitiation which recalls, e.g., the sacrifice of Iphigeneia, the king's daughter (cf. Plataia, the daughter of king Kithairon) who dressed as bride walks to her death to atone for her father's sacrilege. The treatment of the *daidala* is characterized by an ambivalence which has been observed in mythological reflections of scapegoat rituals (e.g., the myth of Polykrite of Naxos): something selected because of its beauty is decorated and cast out and destroyed as threatening and harmful.[34] To regard the burning of the *daidala* as a transformation of a *pharmakos* ritual is perhaps too speculative, but the evidence that this ritual was conceived as a sacrifice is compelling; that the sacrifice had a propitiating or expiatory character is suggested both by its form (holocaust) and its aetiological myth (appeasement of Hera).

---

[29] Loucas-Durie 1988, 156; cf. tentatively Frontici-Ducroux 1975, 206–212. Rejected by Jost (1997, 90 note 31) without any further discussion. Bonnechere 1994, has not discussed this case.

[30] Cf. Simon 1997, 85f., based on Meuli's observations and the study of Y. Béquignon on the agrarian character of the fire ritual on Mt. Oete (Béquignon 1937, esp. 216–219); cf. Nilsson 1967, 130f.

[31] Nilsson 1906, 51, speaks of a 'Vogelorakel' (cf. Kossatz-Deissmann 1988, 666).

---

[32] Burkert 1985, 56.

[33] E.g. Sokolowski 1962, no. 41 L. 23f.: αἶγα κ[αλλι]στεύοντα; Sokolowski 1969, no. 92 L. 37: τὸ καλλιστεῖον. For further examples see Chaniotis 1995, 158f.

[34] For this ambivalence see Burkert 1985, 84; for the conflation of ideas of human sacrifice and scapegoat rituals (pharmakos) cf. ibid. and Bonnechere 1994, 303f.

5. *The Daidala as a celebration of Boiotian unity*

Sacred marriage, departure and return, fire ritual, and expiatory sacrifice are still not the only components of the Daidala in the form the festival was celebrated in the Imperial period. The festival's political nature is prominent in Pausanias' report and has not escaped the notice of modern scholarship, especially of A. Schachter and L. Prandi (see note 10). An elaborate reconstruction of the 'political' history of the Daidala, has been suggested by L. Prandi: the Daidala represent the amalgamation of a ritual at Alalkomenai, in which the *daidala* were perceived as a symbol of fertility, of a sacred wedding celebrated on the Kithairon, in which Hera must have had a predecessor (Leto?), and of the cult of Hera; at some point of its history, Plataiai was able to take under its patronage this Pamboiotian festival; this evolution may indeed be reflected by the relevant aetiological myths, especially by the role of Leto and by the replacement of Alalkomenes, as the wise advisor of Zeus, by Kithairon.[35] Clark (1998, 25) has plausibly recognized in the Daidala, in the form it was celebrated from the late Classical period onwards, an expression of the political and cultural identity of Plataiai and the cities of Boiotia.

There can be no doubt concerning the festival's political nature, which can be observed also in small details. First of all, Pausanias makes clear that the quarrel and reconciliation of Zeus and Hera had presented the mythological exemplum for the reconciliation of Thebes and Plataiai in the late 4th century BC; in his words: 'for the Thebans *too* (καὶ οὗτοι) wanted to reconcile themselves with the Plataians.' The words καὶ οὗτοι make sense only in the context of another reconciliation mentioned earlier, i.e. the reconciliation of Zeus and Hera. Furthermore, the mode of distribution of the fourteen *daidala* among big and small poleis—with eight big poleis receiving one *daidalon* each, the smaller poleis sharing six images—corresponds roughly to the mode of the appointment of the Boiotarchs in the Boiotian Koinon of the late 4th cent. BC, with Tanagra appointing one, Thespiai and Orchomenos sending two, six small cities sharing another two, and Thebes appointing four Boiotarchs.[36] Another feature of a political nature is the *propompeia*, i.e., the sequence of the representatives in the procession. Processions which take place under the participation of different groups confront them with the question about who is going to lead the pompe. In the Eleutheria of Plataiai the decision was taken at the *dialogos*, the rhetorical competition between the representatives of Athens and Sparta (Robertson 1986); at Bargylia, during the festival of Artemis Kindyas, the tribe which had raised the most beautiful cow received this honor (*SEG* XLV 1508 A LL. 6–9). At the Daidala, this decision was taken by lot. These elements must have been added to the celebration in the course of an artificial reorganisation of the festival as a Pamboiotian festival in the Classical or Hellenistic period. In fact, the Daidala must have been the object of articifial reorganisations several times in their history, not least because of important political events which must have affected the cult of Hera at Plataiai and either interrupted the celebration of the festival (cf. Pausanias 9.3.5) or changed the city which was in charge of the celebration; such events were the Persian Wars (479 BC), the Theban victory in 426 BC, and the refoundation of Plataiai in 386 BC.[37] It goes without saying that such elements as the Pamboiotian unity or the motif of interstate reconciliation, which the Daidala reflected from the Hellenistic period onwards, were not part of the festival's original meaning.

---

[35] Prandi 1983, 86–94. Cf. Jost 1997, 91.

[36] Roesch 1965, 47. Roesch 1965, 104 has suggested that the list of the participants at the Daidala includes the cities which had the right to elect one of the

6. *Putting the pieces together*

Let me summarize the results of this analysis. The discrepancies between myths and ritual and the incompatibility among the various rituals which were part of the Daidala in the Imperial period

---

federal magistrates, the aphedriateuontes. But see Prandi 1983, 92 note 37. As Schachter (1981, 248f.) has pointed out, the list of participant towns reflects the situation in the 1st and 2nd cent. AD, but the number of the 14 daidala may well be traditional. Cf. Prandi 1983, 92f.; Jost 1997, 91.

[37] For these events and their effect on the cult of Hera see Prandi 1983. One (minor) reorganisation can be dated with certainty to ca. 317 or 315 BC, when Thebes was allowed to participate in the festival (Schachter 1981, 247f.; Prandi 1983, 89). I tentatively suspect a further reorganisation in ca. 220, in a period in which several Pamboiotian festivals were reorganised (see more recently Nafissi 1995; Knoepfler 1996), but there is no evidence for this assumption. The absense of two important Hellenistic cities (Haliartos and Akraiphia) may imply a further change in the distribution of the *daidala* in the Imperial period (cf. Schachter 1981, 248f.).

suggest that the celebration described by Pausanias and the myths narrated by him and by Plutarch present the result of amalgamations and artificial transformations. We may tentatively identify three separate pre-Classical sources for the rituals which later constituted one single festival:

1. In Plataiai, as in other parts of Greece, a hieros gamos of Hera and Zeus was celebrated. Traces of this ritual are still recognizible in the epikleseis of Hera, in the first version of the aetiological myth, and in the joint sacrifice offered to Zeus and Hera on Mt. Kithairon. A wooden image may have been used for this celebration. In that case, the archaic statuettes of Boiotia ('Brettidole') with bridal features are representations of Hera, as assumed by E. Simon (see note 49), but they related to a celebration of her sacred marriage and not to the holocaust on Mt. Kithairon. Since marriage, departure, and return of Hera seem to constitute a unity in the aetiological myths, the idea of the periodical departure and return of a goddess of fertility may have been connected with this sacred marriage at some point.
2. A *separate* ritual consisted in the construction and the burning of a wooden image or images. Several elements of the festival recall fire rituals, which according to recent research were associated with fertility.
3. There are strong indications that yet another separate fire ritual, probably repeated at irregular intervals, had the character of a propitiatory sacrifice. It may have included the ritual enactment of the sacrifice of the daughter of a king, dressed as a bride, in order to appease a goddess' wrath. A wooden image, a *daidalon*, may have been used for this ritual enactement as well.

In historical times the festival had a predominantly political character. The motif of reconciliation had overshadowed other motifs (fertility, sacred wedding, and atonement). The troubled history of Plataiai resulted in several interruptions and reorganisations of these celebrations, which in the end were combined into one.

7. *Ritual dynamics in Greek festivals*

The Daidala are not the only Greek festival which demonstrates such a complex overlapping of heterogenous and sometimes contradictory elements. We may observe similar (perhaps less complex) phenomena in the case, e.g., of the Athenian Oschophoria and Pyanopsia or the Spartan Hyakinthia to mention but a few. In the Classical period the Oschophoria combined the cult of Dionysos with that of Athena Skiras and with an aetiological myth connected with Theseus, as the prototype of the Athenian ephebe; it combined elements of initiatory transvestism with those of a festival of viticulture.[38] The Pyanopsia, originally an agrarian festival to judge by its name, had become a festival of Theseus.[39] The Hyakinthia of Sparta combined in the course of its history so many elements, that modern scholarship did not have any difficulties in interpreting it variably, as a chthonic, initiatory, agrarian, or new year festival.[40] These transformations are result of the tensions between traditional ritual actions, which have to be performed in a particular way, and continually changing communities of performers, participants, and receptors or spectators that invest the rituals with new meanings.

The mechanisms of transformation, reinterpretation, and association of rituals are sometimes easier to recognize than in others. The changes which are best documented are those of a political nature.[41] The cause of the change may often be rather coincidental. E.g., the fact that a political event occurred on the day of an already existing festival may transform it radically (Chaniotis 1987, 136). In Athens, the festival of Artemis Agrotera became a commemorative historical anniversary of the battle of Marathon which had taken place on the festival's day (Parker 1996, 153). Dionysos Lysios in Eretria was worshipped as the patron of the city's freedom because the city was liberated on the day of a procession for the god (Jaccottet 1990). Sometimes social changes, more difficult to detect and date accurately, result in a change of a festival's function. The Athenian Thargelia offer a very instructive case. The predominant rituals of their celebration were the offering of first-fruit to Apollo and a scapegoat ritual. In the Classical period the festival was celebrated by the phratries and was dedicated to Apollo Patroios; as the role of the phratries declined in the Hellenistic period, the god's epithet was somehow reinterpreted and associated with the achievement of the forefathers (*progonoi*) and the fatherland (*patris*). A decree which concerns the reorganisation of the festival in 129/128 BC applies the words *patris* and *progonoi* seven times in 18 lines, focusing on military victories and glorious deeds.[42] Social changes make some festivals (e.g., festivals related to initiation) obsolete, but some of their ritual acts may survive as parts of another festival. The initiatory transvestism at the Oschophoria in Athens may be such a survival.[43] Finally, in some cases we may assume that the increasing popularity of a divinity (e.g., Dionysos) or a hero (e.g., Theseus) not only overshadowed festivals which were celebrated in the same month, but also integrated them into their celebrations. This is how we may explain the concentration of festivals connected with Theseus in Athens in the Pyanopsion, festivals which originally seem to have had other patron gods.[44]

---

[38] See esp. Jeanmaire 1939, 338–363; Deubner 1966, 142–147; Calame 1990, 143–148, 324–348; cf. Parker 1996, 308–311, and Waldner 2000, 102–154 with further bibliography.

[39] Cf. Deubner 1966, 198–201; Calame 1990, 150–153, 291–324.

[40] See esp. Nilsson 1906, 129–140; Jeanmaire 1939, 526–530; Brelich 1969, 141–148, 177–207; Bruit 1990; Brulé 1992; Pettersson 1992, esp. 9–41; Kennell 1995, 64–67. A problem of modern research on the Hyakinthia (of Pettersson's treatment in particular) is that it focuses on the Spartan evidence, ignoring the fact that this festival was widely celebrated. For another example of the conflation of rituals of different origins, the Daphnephoria at Thebes, see Prandi 1983, 88f.

[41] Cf. Parker 1996, 267–275, for late Classical and Hellenistic Athens.

I suspect that the different explanations given by ancient authors of the names of festivals or ritual phrases are due to changes in their perception, which then lead to misunderstandings and reinterpretations of names, divine epithets, and ritual phrases. The Athenian festival of the Anthesteria offers us an instructive example. The ancient literary tradition gives us two versions of the phrase which allegedly signaled the end of the last day of the Anthesteria: θύραζε Κᾶρες ('get out, you Karians') or θύραζε κῆρες ('get out, you spirits'). This is not the place to discuss the controversial question whether the Athenians chased away the souls of the dead or mummers recalling Attica's aboriginal inhabitants, but it is at least certain that the interpretation of this day as celebration of a 'verkehrte Welt' postdates the importation of Karian slaves in Classical Athens.[45] A change in the perception of one of the oldest and most widespread Greek festivals, the festival of Demeter Thesmophoros, may also be responsible for the controversy which existed already in antiquity with regard to its name.[46] According to Cornutus' view, which most modern scholars share, Thesmophoros characterized Demeter as the law-giving goddess;[47] but others interpreted the *thesmoi* as the 'things laid down'.[48] In this context I am not concerned with the question which of the two meanings is the original one; what matters here is the fact that such controversies and misunderstandings were possible.

---

[42] Sokolowski 1962, no. 14 LL. 2–20; cf. Chaniotis 1995, 153f. On the Thargelia see Deubner 1966, 179–198; Burkert 1979, 59–77; Calame 1990, 308–319; Lambert 1998, 216f.

[43] For initiatory transvestism, in general, see more recently Leitao 1995. For transvestism at the Oschophoria see Jeanmaire 1939, 352–356; Calame 1990, 145.

[44] Cf. Calame 1990, 125–184; Parker 1996, 168–170.

[45] Souls of the dead: e.g., Deubner 1966, 113f.; mummers recalling Attica's aboriginal inhabitants: Burkert 1983, 226–230. Bierl 1994, 32–36 (with the earlier bibliography), correctly observes the liminality of these groups and also of the Karian slaves.

How and why different early celebrations, a sacred wedding, a fire ritual, a festival of Hera, and an expiatory sacrifice were associated in one festival—our Daidala of the historical period—can only be a matter of speculation. One might suspect that this conflation of different sources was made possible because of the association of all these rituals with ideas of fertility, but there is a far more simple (and possibly more plausible) explanation: the factor which played the most important part in this development was not the common meaning or the common function of different rituals, but a superficial similarity, a common detail of all these rituals: the use of wooden images. A wooden image could have been used in a *hieros gamos* (as in Samos); we know of a wooden image of Hera in Tanagra in Boiotia, and if the archaic statuettes of Boiotia ('Brettidole') are correctly identified with representations of wooden images of Hera, it is noteworthy that they have bridal features.[49] Therefore, they may reflect the use of a wooden image in this celebration. A wooden image (*daidalon*) was also used in the celebration of the annual coming and departure of a goddess of fertility, as W. Burkert has demonstrated; wooden images were burned in fire rituals and possibly in substitute sacrifices of a propitiatory character. As these separate celebrations were often interrupted—sometimes for long periods of time—due to the troubled history of Boiotia and Plataiai, it should not be surprising if their original meaning and function blurred in the course of time. But the memory and the popularity of such spectacular celebrations, involving processions, music, dances, and bonfires, must have remained vivid. The wooden images were always there, in all these celebrations, and they became the joining link of the different rituals. It was this element—the most popular and the most spectacular—that finally gave the outcome of the gradual amalgamation of rituals its name: the Daidala. Then it was the job of the mythographers and the exegetai to make sense of all this.[50]

---

[46] See Cornutus, *De natura deorum* 28: ἐντεῦθεν θεσμοθέτιν αὐτὴν προσηγόρευσαν οἷον νομοθέτιν οὖσαν, οὐκ ὀρθῶς τινων θεσμὸν ὑπολαβόντων εἰρῆσθαι τὸν καρπὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτὸν ἀποτοτίθεσθαι καὶ θησαυρίζεσθαι.

[47] Cf., e.g., LSJ, s.v.; Detienne 1989, 129. For *thesmos*, as the earliest Greek term for law see Gschnitzer 1995.

[48] According to Nilsson (1906, 324; cf. Deubner 1966, 44f.) these *thesmoi* were the secret things laid in the *megara* (piglets, cakes, etc.) and then carried during the festival.

[49] Simon 1972, 213f.

I should mention an important objection to this scenario. William Furley (1981, 203) has pointed out that an explanation which is 'entwicklungsgeschichtlich' in type fails to explain how the paradox of the burning of a 'bride' and the role of Hera as a *nympheutria* and not *nympheuomene* could be sustained and remain meaningful at any one performance of the festival. I think that such a question can only be asked by historians of religion, exegetes, or foreign spectators, and not by the celebrants of festivals. Agatharchides narrates a very instructive anecdote which incidentally concerns, again, Boiotia:[51] 'The Boiotians sacrifice to the gods those eels of the Kopaic Lake which are of surpassing size, putting wreaths on them, saying prayers over them, and casting barley-corns on them as on any other sacrificial victim; and to the foreigner who was utterly puzzled at the strangeness of this custom and asked the reason, the Boiotian declared that he knew one answer, and he would reply that one should observe ancestral customs, and it was not his business to justify them to other men' (transl. by G.B. Gulick, modified).

The Daidala confront us with questions that we cannot answer with certainty. And yet this festival, with its complicated structure and the coexistence of heterogenous elements, presents an instructive case of a festival with many overlapping layers of rituals, which came together in the course of a long development. Despite their conservative character (paradoxically, *because* of their conservative character) rituals are a very dynamic cultural phenomenon. Their conservative character obliges a community to fulfill them in a particular form, generation after generation. But in the course of time, and as the conditions change, functions and meanings become blurred and rituals adapt themselves to continually changing environments. The anecdote of Agatharchides demonstrates that a ritual was performed not because of its original meaning, which was obviously forgotten, but because of the importance attached to the preservation of ancestral traditions, thus assuming a new, 'patriotic' meaning. We have already seen that the predominant motif in the Daidala of the Imperial period was that of conflict and reconciliation and the promotion of local identity (cf. notes 10 and 35).

---

[50] Cf. Jost 1997, 92. The late and artificial creation of the aetiological mythos is demonstrated by their protagonists, who are personifications of topographical elements of Boiotia: Kithairon, the wise advisor, is the high mountain on the top of which the festival was celebrated; the father of the 'bride', Asopos, is the local river; the adviser in another version, Alalkomenes, is named after the small town of Alalkomenai, which provided the tree for the construction of the *daidala*; the flutists and the dancers were provided by the personification of Boiotia; and one of the mythical brides, is Plataia herself, which may be an old name of the Earth goddess (see above, note 13).

[51] *FrgrHist* 86 F 5 (apud Athenaios VII 297d/e). I owe this reference to Dr. J. Mylonopoulos.

Exactly the blurring of meanings and the misunderstanding of their performance permits reinterpretations and new associations. Ancient philosophers were puzzled about whether Theseus' ship remained the same even though its rotten wooden components were continually being replaced. Festivals somehow confront us with a similar problem. Do ritual actions remain the same when their performers and receptors change? Being a historian of law and society I can only give a negative answer. Our efforts to find overall explanations of rituals and above all our natural fascination with the quest of origins should not overshadow an elementary truth: that even when ritual actions remain unchanged, the rituals as 'language' and communication (cf. Graf 1997) still change simply because of the fact that their performers and their receptors differ. It is for this reason that the application of different methods in the study of festivals is not only legitimate, but also necessary. Changing the phrase of a famous philosopher one might say, rather provocatively, that 'one cannot celebrate the same festival twice'.

Appendix: The sources

1. Plutarch, *FrgrHist* 388 F 1 (Περὶ τῶν ἐν Πλαταιαῖς Δαιδάλων): They narrate that when Hera was being raised in Euboia she was abducted by Zeus, while she was still a virgin; she was brought here [to Boiotia] and hidden; Kithairon provided them with a shady hidden corner (*mychos*) and a natural chamber (*thalamos*). When Makris, Hera's nurse,

came here looking for Hera and wanted to search for her, Kithairon did not allow her to take any trouble about it and did not lead her to the hiding place, claiming that Zeus was resting and staying there with Leto. Thereupon Makris left and Hera escaped in this way. Later, in grateful memory of Leto, Hera gave her (Leto) a share in her altar and in her temple, so that Leto Mychia receives a sacrifice (*prothysia*) as well; but other people call her Nychia; at any rate, both epithets remind of Hera's hiding and escape . . . After the marriage [of Hera and Zeus] had become known and because their intercourse had been revealed for the first time near Kithairon and near the city of Plataia, they gave Hera the name Teleia and Gamelia . . . But perhaps I should also narrate the more simple myth as well. They say that when Hera had quarreled with Zeus and was not willing to stay in the same place and was hiding, Zeus was wandering around helpless until he met the authochtonous Alalkomenes. Alalkomenes advised him to deceive Hera and to do so as if he would marry another woman. With Alalkomenes' help Zeus cut secretly a big and very beautiful oak tree, he gave it the shape of a woman, decorated it as a bride and called it Daidale. Then they sang for her the wedding song, the nymphs of the river Triton gave her the nuptial bath, and Boiotia provided for flutists and revellers. When all this was almost completed, Hera lost her patience. She came down from Mt. Kithairon, followed by the women of Plataia, and ran full of anger and jealousy to Zeus. But when she realised, that it was a doll, she reconciled herself with joy and laughter with Zeus and took the role of the bridesmaid. She honored this wooden image and named the festival Daidala. Nonetheless, she burned the image, although it was not alive, because of her jealousy.

2. Pausanias 9.2.7–9.3.3: There is at Plataia a temple of Hera, worth seing for its size and for the beauty of its images . . . The Hera they call Teleia (Married); it is an upright image of huge size . . . Here too is another image of Hera; it is seated, and was made by Kallimachos. The goddess they call the Nympheuomene (Bride) for the following reason. Hera, they say, was for some reason or other angry with Zeus, and had retreated to Euboia. Zeus, failing to make her change her mind, visited Kithairon, at that time ruler in Plataia, who surpassed all men for his cleverness. So he ordered Zeus to make an image of wood, and to carry it, wrapped up, in a bullock wagon, and to say that he was celebrating his marriage with Plataia, the daughter of Asopos. So Zeus followed the

advise of Kithairon. Hera heard the news at once, and at once appeared on the scene. But when she came near the wagon and tore away the dress from the image, she was pleased at the deceit, on finding it a wooden image and not a bride, and was reconciled to Zeus. To commemorate this reconciliation they celebrate a festival called Daidala, because the men of old time gave the name *daidala* to wooden images . . .

So the Plataians hold the festival of the Daidala every seventh year, according to the local exegetes, but really at a shorter interval. I wanted very much to calculate exactly the interval between one Daidala and the next, but I was unable to do so. In this way they celebrate the festival. Not far from Alalkomenai is a grove of oaks. Here the trunks of the oaks are the largest in Boiotia. To this grove come the Plataians, and lay out portions of boiled flesh. They keep a strict watch on the crows which flock to them, but they are not troubled at all about the other birds. They mark carefully the tree on which a crow settles with the meat it has seized. They cut down the trunk of the tree on which the crow has settled, and make of it the daidalon; for this is the name that they give to the wooden image also. This festival the Plataians celebrate by themselves, calling it the Little Daidala, but the Great Daidala, which is celebrated with them by the Boiotians, is a festival held with intervals of fifty-nine years, for that is the period during which, they say, the festival could not be held, as the Plataians were in exile. There are fourteen wooden images ready, having been provided each year at the Little Daidala. Lots are cast for them by the Plataians, Koronaians, Thespians, Thangraians, Chaironeis, Orchomenians, Lebadeis, and Thebans. For at the time when Kassandros, the son of Antipater, rebuilt Thebes, the Thebans wished to be reconciled with the Plataians, to share in the common assembly, and to send a sacrifice to the Daidala. The towns of less account pool their funds for images. Bringing the image to the Asopos, and setting it upon a wagon, they place a bridesmaid also on the wagon. They again cast lots for the position they are to hold in the procession. After this they drive the wagons from the river to the summit of Kithairon. On the peak of the mountain an altar has been prepared, which they make in the following way. They fit together quadrangular pieces of wood, putting them together just as if they were making a stone building, and having raised it to a height they place brushwood upon the altar. The cities with their magistrates sacrifice a cow to Hera and a bull to

Zeus, burning on the altar the victims, full of wine and incense, along with the *daidala*. Rich people, as individuals sacrifice what they wish; but the less wealthy sacrifice the smaller cattle; all the victims alike are burned. The fire seizes the altar and the victims as well, and consumes them all together. I know of no blaze that is so high, or seen so far as this (transl. by W.H.S. Jones, modified).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aravantinos, V., Mycenaean Place-Names from Thebes, *Minos* 20–22 (1987) 33–40.

Avagianou, A., *Sacred Marriage in the Rituals of Greek Religion* (Bern-Berlin-Frankfurt-New York 1991).

Bèquignon, Y., *La vallée du Spercheios des origines au IV^e^ siècle. Études d'archéologie et de topographie* (Paris 1937).

Bierl, A., Karion, die Karer und der Plutos des Aristophanes als Inszenierung eines anthesterienartigen Ausnahmefestes, in: A. Bierl, P. von Möllendorff (eds.), *Orchestra. Drama, Mythos, Bühne. Festschrift für Hellmut Flashar anlässlich seines 65. Geburtstages* (Stuttgart-Leipzig 1994) 30–43.

Bonnechere, P., *Le sacrifice humain en Grèce ancienne* (Athens-Liège 1994).

Brelich, A., *Paides e parthenoi* (Rome 1969).

Bruit, L., The Meal at the Hyakinthia: Ritual Consumption and Offering, in: O. Murray (ed.), *Sympotica. A Symposium on the Symposion* (Oxford 1990) 162–174.

Brulé, P., Fêtes grecques: Périodicité et initiations. Hyakinthies et Panathénées, in: A. Moreau (ed.), *L'initiation. Actes du colloque international de Montpellier 11–14 avril 1991* (Montpellier 1992) I 19–38.

Burkert, W., *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London 1979) 132–134.

——, *Homo Necans. The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London 1983; translated by P. Bing).

——, *Greek Religion* (Cambridge, Mass. 1985).

——, Katagógia-Anagógia and the Goddess of Knossos, in: R. Hägg, N. Marinatos, G. Nordquist (eds.), *Early Greek Cult Practice. Proceedings of the Fifth International Symposium at the Swedish Institute at Athens, 26–29 June, 1986* (Stockholm 1988) 81–87.

Calame, C., *Thésée et l'imaginaire athénien* (Lausanne 1990).

Chaniotis, A., Gedenktage der Griechen: Ihre Bedeutung für das Geschichtsbewußtsein griechischer Poleis, in: J. Assmann (ed.), *Das Fest und das Heilige. Religiöse Kontrapunkte zur Alltagswelt* (Gütersloh 1991), 123–145.

——, Die Geschichte von Amnisos von Homer bis zur Eroberung Kretas durch die Türken, in: J. Schäfer (ed.), *Amnisos nach den archäologischen, topographischen, historischen und epigraphischen Zeugnissen des Altertums und der Neuzeit* (Berlin 1992) 73–127.

——, Sich selbst feiern? Die städtischen Feste des Hellenismus im Spannungsfeld zwischen Religion und Politik, in: P. Zanker, M. Wörrle (eds.), *Stadtbild und Bürgerbild im Hellenismus* (Munich 1995) 147–172.

Clark, I., The Gamos of Hera. Myth and Ritual, in: S. Blundell, M. Williamson (eds.), *The Sacred and the Feminine in Ancient Greece* (London 1998) 13–26.

Detienne, M., The Violence of Wellborne Ladies: Women in the Thesmophoria, in: M. Detienne, J.-P. Vernant (eds.), *The Cuisine of Sacrifice among the Greeks* (Chicago-London 1989; translated by P. Wissing) 129–147.

Deubner, L., *Attische Feste* (Berlin 1966; second edition).

Farnell, L.R., *The Cults of the Greek States. Vol. I* (Oxford 1896).

Frazer, J.G., *The Golden Bough. A Study in Magic and Religion. Part I. The Magic Art and the Evolution of Kings. Volume II* (London ^{3}1913).

Frontisi-Ducroux, F., *Dédale. Mythologie de l'artisan en Grèce ancienne* (Paris 1975).

Furley, W.D., *Studies in the Use of Fire in Ancient Greek Religion* (New York 1981).

Graf, F., Zeichenkonzeption in der Religion der griechischen und römischen Antike, in: R. Posner, K. Robering, T.A. Sebeok (eds.), *Semiotik. Ein Handbuch zu den zeichentheoretischen Grundlagen von Natur und Kultur* (Berlin-New York 1997) 939–958.

Jaccottet, A.-F., Le lierre de la liberté, *ZPE* 80 (1990) 150–156.

Jacoby, F., *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker. Dritter Teil. Kommentar* (Leiden 1955).

Jeanmaire, J., *Couroi et Courètes. Essai sur l'éducation spartiate et sur les rites d'adolescence dans l'antiquité classique* (Lille 1939).

Jost, M., Le thème des disputes entre Héra et Zeus en Arcadie et en Béotie, in: *Héra. Images, espaces, cultes. Actes du Colloque International de Lille* (Naples 1997) 87–92.

Kennell, N.M., *The Gymnasium of Virtue: Education and Culture in Ancient Sparta* (Chapell Hill-London 1995).

Kerényi, K., *Zeus und Hera. Urbild des Vaters, des Gatten und der Frau* (Leiden 1972).

Kern, O., *Die Religion der Griechen. Erster Band. Von den Anfängen bis Hesiod* (Berlin 1926).

Kirsten, E., Plataiai, *RE* XX.2 (1950) 2255–2332.

Knoepfler, D., La réorganisation du concours des Mouseia à l'époque hellénistique: esquisse d'une solution nouvelle, in: A. Hurst, A. Schachter (eds.), *La Montagne des Muses* (Geneva 1996) 141–167.

Kossatz-Deissmann, A., Hera, in: *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (Zurich-Munich 1988) IV 659–719.

——, Semele, in: *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (Zurich-Munich 1994) VII 718–726.

Lambert, S.D., *The Phratries of Attica* (Ann Arbor ^{2}1998).

Leitao, D.D., The Perils of Leukippos: Initiatory Transvestism and Male Gender Ideology in the Ekdusia of Phaistos, *ClAnt* 14 (1995) 130–163.

Loucas-Durie, E., Simulacre humain et offrande rituelle, *Kernos* 1 (1988) 151–162.

Ma, J., Black Hunter Variations, *PCPS* 40 (1994) 49–80.

Meuli, K., Griechische Opferbräuche, in: O. Gigon *et alii* (eds.), *Phyllobolia für Peter von der Mühll zum 60. Geburtstag am 1. August 1945* (Basel 1946) 185–287 = *Gesammelte Schriften* (Basel 1975) II 907–1018.

Nafissi, M., Zeus Basileus di Lebadea. La politica religiosa del koinon beotico durante la guerra cleomenica, *Klio* 77 (1995) 149–169.

Nilsson, M.P., *Griechische Feste von religiöser Bedeutung mit Ausschluß der attischen* (Lund 1906).

——, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion. 1. Die Religion Griechenlands bis auf die griechische Weltherrschaft* (Munich ^{3}1967).

Parker, R., *Athenian Religion: A History* (Oxford 1996).

Pettersson, M., *Cults of Apollo at Sparta: The Hyakinthia, the Gymnopaidiai, and the Karneia* (Stockholm 1992).

Pötscher, W., *Hera. Eine Strukturanalyse im Vergleich mit Athena* (Darmstadt 1987).

Prandi, L., L'Heraion di Platea e la festa di Daidala, in: M. Sordi (ed.), *Santuari e politica nel mondo antico* (Milan 1983) 82–94.

Robertson, N., A Point of Precedence at Plataia. The Dispute between Athens and Sparta over Leading the Procession, *Hesperia* 55 (1986) 88–102.

Roesch, P., *Thespies et la confédération béotienne* (Paris 1965).

Schachter, A., *Cults of Boiotia. Volume 1. Acheloos to Hera* (London 1981).

Simon, E., Hera und die Nymphen. Ein bötischer Polos in Stockholm, *RA* (1972) 205–220.

——, *Götter der Griechen* (Munich ^{2}1980).

——, Héra en Béotie et en Thessalie, in: *Héra. Images, espaces, cultes. Actes du Colloque International de Lille* (Naples 1997) 83–86.

Sokolowski, F., *Lois sacrées des cités grecques. Supplément* (Paris 1962).
——, *Lois sacrées des cités grecques* (Paris 1969).
Stengel, P., *Opferbräuche der Griechen* (Leipzig-Berlin 1910).
Sümeghy, V., Die Wagengefässe und das Daidalafest, in: *Atti del VII Congresso Internazionale di Archaeologia Classica* (Rome 1961) III 125–133.
Versnel, H.S., *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion, II. Transition and Reversal in Myth and Ritual* (Studies in Greek and Roman Religion 6, II, Leiden 1993, ²1994).
Waldner, K., *Geburt und Hochzeit des Kriegers. Geschlechterdifferenz und Initiation in Mythos und Ritual der griechischen Polis* (Berlin-New York 2000).
Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, U. von, *Der Glaube der Hellenen* (Berlin 1931).

MEDITERRANE RELIGIONSGESCHICHTE, RÖMISCHE RELIGIONSGESCHICHTE, EUROPÄISCHE RELIGIONSGESCHICHTE: ZUR GENESE EINES FACHKONZEPTS

Burkhard Gladigow

1. *Regionale und lokale Religionsgeschichte*

Darstellungen der Religionsgeschichte einer bestimmten Region stehen regelmäßig vor dem Problem, eine Vielzahl von Kulten und eine Mehrzahl von Religionen so darzustellen, daß sie entweder zusammenzugehören scheinen, oder aber systematisch als 'eine' Religion vertreten werden, die sich gegenüber einer 'anderen' exklusiv verhält. Die Alternative orientiert sich an dem Konflikt von monotheistischen Religionen, deren Identität über lokale Variationen hinweg durch eine verbindliche 'Lehre' garantiert ist, zu polytheistischen Religionen, deren 'Identität' sich erst sekundär aus ihrer regionalen Präsenz ergibt. Wenn der Religionshistoriker die These der Theologen monotheistischer Religionen übernimmt, die Monotheismen seien sowohl untereinander, wie gegenüber polytheistischen Kulten exklusiv, fallen die religionshistorischen Beschreibungssysteme hoffnungslos auseinander. Auf das Paradoxon, daß der 'Maßstab für eine befriedigende Geschichte der griechischen Religion' von Offenbarungsreligionen genommen werden muß, deren 'Lehren' schriftlich fixiert sind—beides trifft für die griechische Religion gerade nicht zu—, hat Martin P. Nilsson bereits am Beginn seiner monumentalen *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*[1] hingewiesen. Zugleich auf das Risiko, daß 'die Modernen' den Griechen auf diese Weise eine 'theologisierende Systematik unterschieben, die unseren, nicht ihren Denkgewohnheiten entnommen ist.'[2] Die Probleme verschärfen sich noch einmal, wenn zugleich die latente Implikation der christlichen monotheistischen Position übernommen wird, 'ein Mensch' könne nur 'eine' Religion haben. Am Konzept und Modell der 'Europäischen Religionsgeschichte', die im folgenden als Folgeerscheinung von mediterraner und römischer Religionsgeschichte angesprochen wird, sollen die beiden Modi theologischer Singularisierung relativiert (oder 'aufgehoben') und in historische Komplexität eingeordnet werden: Weder ist 'Europa' durch 'eine' Religion allein definierbar, wie von der christlichen Kirchengeschichte vorausgesetzt[3], noch darf wie selbstverständlich angenommen werden, daß ein Mensch nur 'eine' Religion habe,— oder 'Religion' so definiert werden, daß nur das möglich ist.

---

[1] Nilsson 1955, 1.

[2] Nilsson 1955, 844, im Schlußwort des ersten Bandes.

Eine Erfassung des Gesamtspektrums an Religionen oder, vorsichtiger ausgedrückt, religiösen Orientierungen, die sich in der Zeit nach der Christianisierung auf dem Gebiet Mitteleuropas finden lassen, ist von der religionswissenschaftlichen Forschung bisher stark vernachlässigt worden. Sofern eine wissenschaftliche Erschließung dieser Region und dieser Epoche unternommen wurde, steht sie fast uneingeschränkt im Banne christlicher Kirchengeschichte, Dogmengeschichte und Theologiegeschichte: Genauer, die christlichen Religionen werden jeweils im Rahmen ihrer Theologien dargestellt, die damit explizit oder implizit den Anspruch erheben, die Religionsgeschichte der eigenen Religion zu sein. Die nichtchristlichen Religionen und Religionen ohne Theologien erscheinen dann im Schema des Noch-nicht-Missioniert-Seins oder der monotheistischen Alternativen. Religionswissenschaft selbst hatte sich tunlichst auf vorchristliche oder außereuropäische Phänomene zu beschränken: Das 'christliche Abendland' sollte nicht ihr Gegenstand sein.

Gegen Kirchengeschichtsschreibung und eine an theologischer Dogmatik orientierte additive 'Religionsgeschichte Europas'[4] stellt eine Europäische Religionsgeschichte das Gesamtspektrum an religiösen Traditionen in den Vordergrund, und behält die theologisch (oder kirchenrechtlich) ausgeschlossenen Möglichkeiten mit im Blick. Die Wirkung der historischen, philologischen und kultwissenschaftlichen Wissenschaften ist ein Teil des Phänomens 'Europäische Religionsgeschichte'. Die ausgeschlossenen Möglichkeiten bleiben 'im Spiel', Anachronismen oder Nativismen (ethnologisch gesprochen[5]) können jederzeit wieder aufgerufen, 'revitalisiert' werden. Höchst konkret: Über geocities.com/Athens kann man sich heutzutage der Julian Apostata—Gemeinde anschließen und online Kultbilder und Devotionalien des römischen Kaisers zur häuslichen Verehrung bestellen. Der komplexe Pluralismus der Europäischen Religionsgeschichte reflektiert mehr als eine bloße Addition unterschiedlicher oder unterscheidbarer Religionen auf dem Gebiet Europas. Zu einem Pluralismus dieses Typs gehören eine kulturell vorgegebene Regionalisierung, Phasen gemeinsamer historischer Entwicklung, gegenseitige Beeinflussung und reziproke Differenzierung, unterschiedliche Professionalisierungsniveaus und eine flexible 'Nutzbarkeit'.

---

[3] Das wird selbst von Religionshistorikern übernommen. Lanczkowski 1971, 24. Zu den unterschiedlichen Positionen Gladigow 1995, 23ff.

[4] Clemen 1926/31, Lanczkowski 1971.

[5] Gladigow 1994.

Für spezifische Entwicklungen der Europäischen Religionsgeschichte—ich greife im folgenden nur wenige Beispiele heraus—hat die Ausdifferenzierung monotheistischer Religionen aus der polytheistischen Koine des *Imperium Romanum* Elemente und Strukturen vorgegeben. In den Versuchen, die Monotheismen als 'mitlaufende Monotheismen' in den polytheistischen Kontext zu integrieren, und, in den letzten Jahrhunderten des römischen Reichs, in Restaurationen, die mit einem philosophischen ('neuplatonischen') Hintergrund die von den Christen behauptete Unvereinbarkeit von Mono- und Polytheismus aufzuheben versuchten. Aus diesen Vorläufen ergibt sich für eine deskriptive Religionsgeschichte das (europäische) Problem, auch Monotheismen 'nur' als *Teil* eines religiösen Systems zu beschreiben, obwohl die eine Religion für sich den Anspruch erhebt, das ganze System zu sein. Für ausgehende Antike—und Neuzeit—bedeutet das, daß Monotheismen 'immer noch' eine polytheistische Umwelt haben können, gegen die sie sich zwar abzusetzen versuchen, die aber das religiöse Gesamtsystem und seine Optionen mitbestimmt.

2. *Die mediterrane polytheistische Koine: Regionalisierung der Panthea*

An dieser Stelle der systematischen Überlegungen—an der ich mich der mediterranen polytheistischen *koine* zuwenden möchte—ist es notwendig, den religionshistorischen Bezugsrahmen über das Paradigma des christlichen Monotheismus und seinen Religionsbegriff[6] hinaus zu erweitern, ein Paradigma, am dem sich auch die religionssoziologische Theoriebildung wie selbstverständlich orientiert hat. Eine Arbeitsteiligkeit auch der Götter und ihre Hierarchisierung in einem Pantheon begleiten, im östlichen Mittelmeerraum des 4. und 3. vorchristlichen Jahrtausends gut erkennbar, die Etablierung komplexer Kulturen (Staaten, Stadtstaaten): Herrschaft, Gerechtigkeit, Fruchtbarkeit, wirtschaftlicher Erfolg, Kriegserfolg, Heilung usw. können von verschiedenen Göttern hergestellt oder garantiert werden. Eine konsequente Ausdifferenzierung gerade der 'großen' Götter erfolgt jedoch üblicherweise nicht, und so gibt es in den altmediterranen Panthea nicht nur grundsätzliche Antagonismen von Göttern, sondern auch partikuläre Konkurrenzen. Für die grundsätzliche Offenheit eines Polytheismus, wie etwa später des griechischen, ist es bezeichnend, daß Menschen für ihr Leben und ihr 'Heil' in der Regel nicht von einem einzigen Gott—und diesem allein—abhängig sind[7]; das Verhältnis König zum 'Königsgott' mag eine Ausnahme sein.

---

[6] D. Sabbatucci hat verschiedentlich die These vertreten, daß der landläufige europäische Religionsbegriff ein christliches Konstrukt aus einer bestimmten Interessenlage heraus ist: Sabbatucci 1988.

Arbeitsteiligkeit der Götter und ihre tendenzielle Regionalisierung fangen zunehmende kulturelle Komplexität zunächst in einem 'Markt' an Leistungs- und Sinnangeboten[8] auf. Erst mit der *Negation* einer *Wahlmöglichkeit* zwischen Göttern—wie in den 'insulären Monotheismen' des 1. vorchristlichen Jahrtausends entwickelt—ergeben sich weitreichende Konsequenzen innerhalb des einen Teilsystems: Eine dramatisierte Soteriologie und—parallel dazu—das Postulat einer Konversion vom falschen Kult zur wahren Religion. Der Gedanke der Konversion (und Konfession) ist den polytheistischen Religionen grundsätzlich fremd[9]—ein Bedarf dafür fehlt weitgehend—, 'henotheistische' Zuwendungen an Götter mit monotheistischen Prädikationen sind dagegen häufig[10]—und dürfen nicht in einen latenten Monotheismus uminterpretiert werden. Wenn etwa in der griechischen Antike mit der 'Wahl' *eines* Gottes eine '*Lebensform*' verknüpft und diese gegen andere Götter und ihre Ansprüche vertreten wird[11], wird dies in den literarischen Verarbeitungen als höchst konfliktträchtig, 'systemstörend' dargestellt. Die frühen Beispiele und ihre literarischen Diskussionen

---

[7] Gladigow 1990.

[8] Zum 'Marktmodell' P.L. Berger 1963, 1980.

[9] Zum Fehlen von Konversion und Soteriologie in polytheistischen Religionen Gladigow 1997.

[10] Versnel 1990.

[11] Gladigow 1990.

(Paris, Hippolytos) versuchen zu zeigen, daß rigoristische Positionen in einem polytheistischen System zum Scheitern verurteilt sind. Erst das anders gelagerte Exemplum des Herakles prämiert die Entscheidung für *aretê* und gegen 'Glück' (*eudaimonia*)[12] dauerhaft, freilich erst im Durchgang durch den Tod,—zudem bereits in einem pythagoreischen Kontext.

Die Kehrseite dieses Prozesses der Regionalisierung, der im 3. vorchristlichen Jahrtausend einsetzt, liegt in den Anforderungen, die nun an eine 'Versorgung' der Bevölkerung mit Kultstätten unterschiedlicher Art gestellt werden können: Zwischen Pantheonbildungen in Städten und überregionalen 'außerstädtischen Kultzentren' entstehen Konkurrenzen, die zu dem führen, was der Altorientalist W. Lambert als 'sophisticated polytheism'[13] bezeichnet hat. Die Anforderungen einer dauerhaften Organisation des Kultus, der die Versorgung und Besorgung der Kultbilder sicherstellt, und einen circadianen Kultus garantiert (Ägypten), führen zu dem, was man als eine erste 'Professionalisierung von Religion' bezeichnen könnte. Mit dem Bau und der Organisation von Tempeln ist im Mittelmeerraum der Übergang von ubiquitären Epiphanie- oder Divinationsritualen (mit Statuetten als Kult*gerät*) zu einer 'ortsfesten Präsenz' der Götter und damit einer spezifische Regionalisierung des Polytheismus hergestellt. Tempel und Tempelorganisation binden den Kultus in einer neuen Weise an Grundherrschaft und Herrschaftsinteressen. Unter diesen Bedingungen ist es möglich, den Zugang zu den Göttern zu privilegieren und 'andere', fremde Menschen, von einem bestimmten Kult auszuschließen.

3. *Professionalisierung von Religion*

Professionalisierungsprozesse von Religionen erzeugen zunächst einmal systeminterne Ansprüche: Die richtige Ausführung des jeweiligen Kultes, die Wahl des richtiges Gottes und das richtige Verhalten gegenüber den Göttern (bereits drei Referenzebenen) werden unter bestimmte Anforderungen gestellt, die nun von einer religiösen Metaebene her eingeordnet und beurteilt werden können. Die Verlagerung von 'Professionalität' auf eine Metaebene—durchaus nicht die einzige notwendige Form von Professionalisierung—hat zur Folge, daß nun nicht mehr ‘nur’ der richtige Vollzug eines Kultaktes relevant ist und beurteilt werden kann, sondern ein bestimmtes und bestimmbares Verhältnis zu den Göttern oder einem Gott. Die ‘Pflege’ der Metaebene durch Spezialisten erzeugt in diesem Rahmen Trennregeln, die nun auf der gleichen Ebene nicht nur ‘richtig’ und ‘falsch’ vorgeben, sondern auch grundsätzliche religiöse Divergenzen. Aus einer Überlagerung von Symbolkontrolle und Gruppendruck (in Mary Douglas’ Schema)[14] ergeben sich so Häresien, die ‘mehr’ sind als die *hairesis*, die Wahl oder Entscheidung zwischen mehreren, aber gleichwertigen Möglichkeiten. In diesen Prozeß der Professionalisierung ist eine typologische Differenzierung von Religionen eindividiert: Die grundsätzliche Regionalisierung polytheistischer Religionen bindet religiöse Optionen in regionale, soziale und politische Schemata ein; Konversionen und Häresien sind unter diesen Bedingungen gewissermaßen lediglich ‘verräumlicht’. Erst wenn Geltungsansprüche und Geltungsgründe von Göttern oder einem Gott überregional vertreten und soteriologisch monopolisiert werden können, sind Kontrolle und Kontrollinteresse thematisierbar. Dann ist nicht mehr die Frage, ob man den falschen Gott am falschen Ort mit dem falschen Zweck verehrt, angesprochen,—das Problem des Polytheismus—sondern, wie allein man ‘sein Heil’ gewinnen kann—oder erhält.

---

[12] Zur Motivgeschichte Snell 1955, 329ff.

[13] Lambert 1975.

4. *Römische Religion und Religion des Imperium Romanum*

Im Horizont von zwei Jahrtausenden sind im mediterranen Raum in einem komplexen Differenzierungsprozeß singuläre monotheistische Ansätze gegen die umgebenden polytheistischen Strata ausdifferenziert worden: Mit höchst unterschiedlichen Interessen im Hintergrund und unterschiedlich dauerhaftem Erfolg. Erkennbar ist, daß ein ‘stabiler Monotheismus’ das Ergebnis einer Professionalisierung von Religion darstellt: Ohne professionelle Kontrolle sind die ‘polytheistischen Häresien’ allgegenwärtig und attraktiv: Vom Alten Israel über die Engelvorstellungen und Trinitätsspekulationen des 3. nachchristlichen Jahrhunderts bis hin zu einem New Age-Christentum bleiben ‘mitlaufende Polytheismen’ höchst plausibel—und praktikabel. Eine gelebte und praktizierte Ausgrenzung der ‘anderen Möglichkeiten’ bedarf offensichtlich einer ‘Anstrengung’ und bezieht auf diese

---

[14] Douglas 1981.

Weise ein religiöses Umfeld mit ein, das nun gerade nicht monotheistisch ist. Die Integrationsfähigkeit eines komplexen Polytheismus ist—umgekehrt—signifikant höher als die eines Monotheismus. Eine Co-Präsenz von Monotheismen aller Art mit Polytheismen kann als 'Normalfall' von Religion in komplexen Gesellschaften angesehen werden. Stellt man sich nun für den Horizont der römischen Kaiserzeit—das Übergangsfeld in meiner allgemeinen Themenstellung—die Frage, in welchem Medium außerhalb der christlichen Polemik und Apologetik die Frage einer Vereinbarkeit oder Unvereinbarkeit unterschiedlicher religiöser Optionen diskutiert werden konnte, stößt man sehr schnell auf den 'Neuplatonismus', den Platonismus des dritten und vierten nachchristlichen Jahrhunderts. 'Übrig blieben zuletzt—die Bauern, einige Staatsmänner und die unbelehrbaren Professoren der Philosophie.'[15]

Aus der Sicht der Religionsgeschichte stellt der Neuplatonismus des dritten bis sechsten Jahrhunderts so etwas wie eine übergreifende Theologie der antiken polytheistischen Religionen bereit. Die Spannweite dieser Theologie umfaßt rigideste metaphysische Spekulation und handfeste magische Techniken, einen transzendenten Monismus und ausgebreiteten Polytheismus, ausgefeilte Hypostasenspekulationen und eine Theurgie, die magische Inanspruchnahme von Göttern. Die Spannweite dieses 'Systems'—wenn man den Neuplatonismus denn als System bezeichen kann—war so groß, daß er wohl als einzige religiöse Alternative zum sich auch philosophisch etablierenden Christentum angesehen werden konnte: 'Aber der Neuplatonismus?'—schreibt Harnack in *Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums*[16]—' Was fehlte ihm? War er nicht Monotheismus, Sonnenkult, Philosophie und Herzensglaube in Einem? Hatte er nicht Fühlung mit allen früheren Religionen, und verfügte er nicht über das Erbe der gesamten Kultur? Gewiß, das alles besaß er, und da er sich vieler und bedeutender Kulte bemächtigt, den Helios in allen geschaut . . . war er wirklich um das Jahr 300 der bedeutendste Gegner der Kirche.' Den 'Hauptfehler' des 'höheren Heidentums', der schließlich zum Sieg des Christentums geführt habe, sieht Harnack in der Beibehaltung des blutigen Opfers, einen Fehler, für den er, 'so oft er auch darüber nachgedacht habe', keine ganz befriedigende Antwort wisse. Daneben, auf einer anderen Ebene angesiedelt, liefere der Kaiserkult den pauschalen Angriffspunkt an der ‘höheren Samtreligion des Heidentums’.

---

[15] Harnack 1924, 946.
[16] Harnack 1924, 944.

Kein Wunder, daß ein römischer Kaiser, Flavius Claudius Iulianus, von den Christen Julianos Apostata genannt, versuchte, die Wiederherstellung der alten Religion im Gewande neuplatonischer Theologie zu erreichen. Der Hymnos auf Sol invictus, den unbesiegten Sonnengott als Reichsgott, 363 von ihm gedichtet, ist ein Versuch, das Festhalten an der alten Tradition mit neuplatonischer Philosophie zu begründen. Sein Edikt, das den Christen verbot, Rhetorik, Grammatik und Philosophie zu lehren, war ein paralleler Versuch, Christentum und antike Bildung voneinander zu trennen. Mit seinem Tode im Jahre 363 wurden diese Verfügungen aufgehoben, bevor sie wirklich wirksam werden konnten. Zur Öffnung des Neuplatonismus gegenüber den praktizierten antiken Religionen und der Flexibilität seines theologischen Systems gehörte es, ‘das Göttliche’ und Götter und Dämonen mit in seinen Entwurf aufzunehmen: ‘. . . nicht das Göttliche in einem Punkt zusammenzudrängen, sondern es in seiner Vielheit auseinanderzulegen in der Ausdehnung, in der es sich selbst auseinanderlegt, heißt beweisen, daß man die Kraft Gottes kennt’ schreibt Plotin in den Enneaden[17].

Bereits im 2. und 3. nachchristlichen Jahrhundert hatte es vor einem neuplatonischen Hintergrund eine Diskussion über der ‘Passungscharakter’ von Polytheismus und Monotheismus im Verhältnis zum Imperium Romanum gegeben. Mit Celsus als Exponenten wird gerade der römische Polytheismus und das Imperium Romanum in eine harmonische Beziehung gebracht,—ohne daß allerdings dafür ein theologisches Programm bereitstand. D. Sabbatuccis Dictum, der Polytheismus sei in Babylonien entstanden und in Rom untergegangen (‘Il politeismo nasce in Mesopotamia e muore a Roma’[18]), ist nur auf den ersten Blick richtig: Der antike Polytheismus ist gerade nicht restlos in der römischen Staatsidee aufgegangen, konnte also den römischen Staat unter bestimmten Bedingungen überleben.

---

[17] II 9,9.

[18] D. Sabbatucci, *Politeismo II*, Corso di Storia delle Religioni nell’anno acc. 1989–90, p. 1: ‘Il politeismo nasce in Mesopotamia e muore a Roma. Nasce come un modo di pensare sistematicamente il mondo; nel politeismo romano l’ ogetto del pensiero sistematico cessa di essere il mondo e diventa lo stato: è il principio della fine. Ciò che resta è il “pensiero sistematico” (operante per dèi), che a Roma genera l’idea di stato (res publica).’

5. *Römische Religion als 'Übergangsfeld' zur Europäischen Religionsgeschichte*

Die Jahrhunderte des ausgehenden Altertums, die Jahrhunderte vom 2. bis zum 6. Jahrhundert, liefern die Konstitutionsbedingungen einer Religionsgeschichte, in der eine Koexistenz unterschiedlichster Regionalisierungsformen, Verbreitungsmuster und Religionstypen erprobt wurde: Der christliche Monotheismus wird schließlich zur dominierenden Religion, die polytheistischen Alternativen reduzieren sich auf 'mitlaufende Polytheismen'. Entsprechend kann Monotheismus als 'politisches Problem' (Peterson[19]) gesehen werden, samt den Konsequenzen für Trinitätsspekulation und Christologie. 'Religion' wird in ihrer Gesamtheit rechtlich erfaßbar: Nach Justinians Restaurationsversuch wird mit der Constitutio '*cunctos populos*. . . .' des Theodosius zum ersten Male eine einzelne Religion, eine bestimmte Religion, formalrechtlich auf dem Wege einer Rechtsverordnung vorgeschrieben: *Cunctos populos volumus in ea religione versari, quam*. . . . Die parallelen Modi eines Verbots von Kulthandlungen der verschiedenen anderen antiken Religionen durch die christlichen Kaiser hat jüngst Marie Theres Fögen[20] aus der Perspektive der Rechtshistorikerin differenziert beschrieben. An ihrer Analyse lassen sich die grundsätzlichen rechtstechnischen Schwierigkeiten verfolgen, 'Polytheismus' zu verbieten und einen christlichen Monotheismus von Staats wegen vorzuschreiben.

Das vierte nachchristliche Jahrhundert liefert zwischen Porphyrius und Augustin, Julian Apostata und Theodosius auf den verschiedenen Ebenen der Auseinandersetzung neue Muster mit lang nachwirkenden Konsequenzen. Das Modell der 'Singularisierung von Religion' läßt sich nun vertreten (Singularisierung einer *Universalreligion*), die neuplatonischen Polemiken, in dem Glauben an die Engel und in den Märtyrerkulten der Christen sei 'ein ganz normaler Polytheismus' praktiziert, werden zurückgewiesen, die Frage der richtigen und der falschen Religion wird justitiabel: Alle drei Phänomene sind Folgen einer neuen und spezifischen Professionalisierung von Religion auf dem Boden des Römischen Reichs. Das ist grundsätzlich neu.

Schaut man für diesen Zeitraum einmal über die (nördlichen) Reichsgrenzen hinaus, zeigt sich, daß auch die Prozesse zwischen

---

[19] Peterson 1935.

[20] Fögen 1993.

Reichsreligion und angrenzenden germanischen Religionen komplexer sind, als sie die traditionelle Missionsgeschichte (und die an sie anschließende Religionsgeschichte) nachzeichnet. Die Brakteatenforschung mit ihrem gegenüber den schriftlichen Quellen frühen Zeithorizont belegt ein Phänomen, das bisher kaum beachtet worden ist: Akkomodationsversuche der polytheistischen Randkulturen des Nordens an eine monotheistische Reichsreligion, an der Figur Odins (im Verhältnis zu Christus)[21] dann auch bis in die schriftlichen Quellen zu verfolgen. 'Akkomodation' war bisher nur für den gegenläufigen Vorgang, Angleichung des Christentums an eine indigene Religion, verwendet worden—mit systematischen Konsequenzen für Interpretation und Wahrnehmung.

Ich muß mich für die Jahrhunderte zwischen dem Untergang des Römischen Reichs und der Renaissance kurz fassen. Ich überspringe das schnelle Eindringen des Islam in den Raum und die religiösen Kontexte Europas im 8. Jahrhundert, den Ikonoklasmusstreit als eine der vielen theologischen Reaktionen, die Bedeutung des Islam für das europäische Selbstbewußtsein ('Ohne Muhammad kein Karl der Große', H. Pirennes plakativer Satz), die 'dualistische Häresie' der Katharer, wie es Arno Borst genannt hat,[22]—die andere, antike und östliche Traditionen aufrufende Alternative der Europäischen Religionsgeschichte, in der 'Religion selbst einen ganz anderen Platz in der europäischen Kultur einnähme, einen bescheidneren und anziehenderen',[23]—wie es Borst formuliert hat.

6. *Religionsgeschichte der Renaissance*

Ich setze wieder ein im 15. Jahrhundert, dem Jahrhundert, in dem ein *mundus novus* entdeckt wird und die florentinische Renaissance beginnt. Für Prozesse der Europäischen Religionsgeschichte ist das 15. Jahrhundert in einer neuen Weise konstitutiv und im Verhältnis zur mediterranen und römischen Religionsgeschichte folgenreich: Im Westen, in Spanien, werden als Abschluß der Reconquista für eine gewisse Zeit zwei Traditionen aus der westlichen Europäischen Religionsgeschichte ausgeschieden: das Judentum und der Islam. Aus dem Osten, fast gleichzeitig, unter dem Druck des Osmanischen Reichs und dem Fall von Byzanz, werden zwei 'antike Traditionen', zwei religiöse Traditionen aus dem Imperium Romanum wieder eingeführt: Die 'Hermetik' (wie man später gesagt hat) und der Neu-Platonismus.

---

[21] Padberg 1995.

[22] Borst 1988.

[23] Borst 1988, 231.

Die Florentiner Renaissance wird, wenn man so will, in einer Art 'List der Vernunft' durch einen anachronistischen Versuch ausgelöst, im 14. Jahrhundert in der Morea, dem Rest des byzantinischen Reichs, einen Polytheismus als neue Staatsreligion einzuführen: *Gemisthos Plethon* ist die fast vergessene Figur[24], die zwischen dem antiken Polytheismus und einem Europa an den Grenzen der Neuzeit steht. Seine Streitschrift für Platon und gegen Aristoteles (*'peri hôn Aristoteles pros Platona diapheretai'*, de differentiis), sowie seine Vorträge in Florenz waren ein Vorlauf der Platon-Renaissance, die dann vor allem von Marsilio Ficino getragen wurde. Plethons Aufreten ist vor dem Hintergrund seines platonisierenden 'Staatsentwurfes' *Nomon syngraphe* zu sehen, in dem er, auf Platon aufbauend, einen vernünftigen Staat auf der Basis einer vernünftigen Religion entwirft,—und wohl dem Despoten von Morea zugleich anbietet, eine Staatsreform in diesem Sinne durchzuführen. Kern dieses politischen und religiösen Neuentwurfs ist eine am Neuplatonismus orientierte Theologie des *alethes logos*. Zoroaster, Pythagoras, Platon und Plotin sind die Gewährsleute seiner 'hellenischen Theologie'. Plethon restauriert so nicht nur einen religiösen, nichtchristlichen Platonismus, sondern konzipiert auch ohne besondere Mühe einen philosophischen Polytheismus, der ihm nicht nur imaginierte 'Gewaltenteilung im Unendlichen' sein sollte, sondern durchaus Gegenstand eines vernünftigen Kultus, wie ihn schon Platon in den Nomoi[25] gefordert hatte. Für den konkreten Kultus entwirft er, wie jeder ernsthafte religiöse Reformer, einen neuen Kalender (der sich an dem Metons aus dem 5. vorchristlichen Jahrhundert orientiert) und eine regelrechte Liturgie[26] mit Opfern, Gebeten und Hymnen.

Die Wieder-Entdeckung des *Corpus hermeticum* im 15. Jahrhundert ist das andere Paradigma für eine rekursive Religionsgeschichte, das zudem noch weit in die Geschichte der Religionswissenschaft im engeren Sinne hinein reicht. Cosimo Medici gibt Marsilio Ficino 1460, sofort nach dem Kauf des Corpus, den Auftrag, den Text ins

---

[24] Wokart 1988.

[25] Platon, *Nomoi* 799 a 5ff.

[26] Anastos 1948.

Lateinische zu übersetzen, noch vor den Schriften Platons. Der Grund für Aufregung und Eile von Renaissancefürst und Renaissancegelehrtem liegen in der Erwartung, mit diesem Schriftcorpus, den 'Offenbarungen des ägyptischen Toth', der hinter dem dreimalgroßen Hermes zu stehen vorgibt, eine, *die* Uroffenbarung gefunden zu haben. Die 'Offenbarungen' des ägyptischen Gottes hätten somit noch vor den mosaischen liegen müssen, und wären damit sowohl unmittelbarer, wie universeller, die Uroffenbarung, auf die sich eine neue und vorchristliche Religion hätte berufen können. Von dieser neuen Rezeption der 'Hermetik' geht eine breite Wirkung auf Philosophiegeschichte, Naturverständnis und religiöse Alternativen zum Christentum aus. Mit dem Corpus Hermeticum sind nicht nur 'Lesemysterien' aus dem zweiten nachchristlichen Jahrhundert wieder in die Europäische Religionsgeschichte eingeführt, sondern ist auch eine westliche Tradition von 'Esoterik' begründet worden. Der Bedeutung der Hermetik für die Europäische Religionsgeschichte kann kaum unterschätzt werden, im New Age-Rahmen erfährt sie gerade eine zweite Renaissance.

7. *Neue Polytheismen post Christum natum*

Seit den 70er Jahren des letzten Jahrhunderts läuft in Nordamerika eine Diskussion, seit den 80er Jahren in Deutschland, in der ein Polytheimus post Christum noch einmal rekapituliert und in den Rahmen der Europäischen Reliogionsgeschichte eingestellt wird. Mit David L. Millers Buch von 1974 *The New Polytheism*[27] hatte die Kontroverse dann ein Focus bekommen, um den herum über die Angemessenheit eines neuen Polytheismus in der westlichen Moderne gestritten werden konnte. Millers zentrale These ist, daß sich im Polytheismus neuer Form die Vielfalt und Vielgestaltigkeit religiöser Orientierungen gestalten und zugleich organisieren könne,—ohne zugleich wieder in eine latente monistische Lösung zusammenzufallen.

Etwa gleichzeitig mit den amerikanischen Anstößen findet in Deutschland eine—eher akademische—Diskussion über den Polytheismus als Signatur eines neuzeitlichen Pluralismus statt. Protagonist der neuen Diskussion über den Polytheismus ist in Deutschland Odo Marquard mit seinem 'Lob des Polytheismus',[28] einem aus dem sogenannten Systemprogramm des deutschen Idealismus abgeleiteten Versuch, eine 'Polymythie' zu entwerfen, 'die spezifisch der modernen Welt zugehört'. Nietzsche folgend bestimmt Marquard den Beginn der Moderne durch das 'Ende des Monotheismus'[29] und leitet aus dieser These die Forderung nach einem 'aufgeklärten Polytheismus' ab, der das wiederherstellt, was mit der Freiheit der Mythologie verbunden war: 'die Pluralität der Geschichten, die Gewaltenteilung im Absoluten, das große humane Prinzip des Polytheismus'. Jacob Taubes hat in einer kritischen Replik 'Zur Konjunktur des Polytheismus' auf Marquards Intervention für eine moderne Polymythie geantwortet und nimmt nun seinerseits Mythologie in einer spezifischen Weise ernst: "Wenn Mythologie nicht nur eine Literaturgattung: Göttergeschichten, Geschichten von Heroen und Dämonen, bezeichnet, sondern durch eine besondere Geisteslage bestimmt ist . . .: . . . Odo Marquard wird sich fragen (lassen) müssen, ob sein spätes "Lob des Polytheismus" . . . nicht nur eine mythische Geisteslage indiziert, sondern produziert", zusammengezogen in das auktoriale Verdikt 'Die Rekurse auf Mythos post Christum sind in Wahrheit nur Wiederholungen der Apostasie Julians.'[30] . . . 'Was die neuere Religionsgeschichte betreibt, ist nichts Geringeres als eine Apologie des Polytheismus, nachdem zweitausend Jahre Christentum unsere Augen dafür geblendet haben.'[31]

---

[27] Miller 1974.

[28] Marquard 1981.

8. *Zusammenfassung und Ausblick*

Ich versuche zusammenzufassen, was ich in großen Linien und nur an Beispielen skizziert habe, zugleich den einen oder anderen Akzent hinzuzufügen. Was in den einzelnen Skizzen vorgestellt wurde, ist eine andere Religionsgeschichte, die nicht (nur) ideengeschichtlich, singularisierend, reduktionistisch, operiert, sondern die Komplexität religiöser Phänomene selbst zum Gegenstand erhebt ('rettet die Komplexität' als Motto). Es ist auch insofern eine andere Religionswissenschaft, als mit ihr die kolonialen Rahmenbedingungen ihrer Entstehung programmatisch verlassen werden: Nicht die ferne—historisch und geographisch—und fremde Religion ist der privilegierte Gegenstand, sondern Religionen in ihrem kulturellen Kontext. Für europäische Verhältnisse heißt das, sowohl die Religionen der verschiedenen europäischen Traditionen, als auch Religionen der Migranten, als auch Religionen als Epiphänomen von Wissenschaften, und Religionen, die nur im Medium von Wissenschaften tradiert werden.

---

[29] Marquard 1970, 53.
[30] Taubes 1983, 464.
[31] Taubes 1983, 464.

Ein Modell dieser Art ist vor allem geeignet, die noch immer weiterwirkenden missionswissenschaftlichen Prämissen der Religionswissenschaft des 19. Jahrhunderts zu überwinden. Eine Konsequenz dieser Prämissen war ein christlich-europäischer Religionsbegriff als Maxime im Umgang mit fremden Kulturen: Was an einer fremden Kultur durch das Christentum ersetzbar schien, wurde als 'Religion' klassifiziert, und was nicht, konnte als 'indigene Kultur' weiterbestehen. Das heißt, die Strategie, die das entstehende Christentum gegenüber dem Imperium Romanum eingeschlagen hatte, nämlich einen eigenen Religionsbegriff zu generieren (Dario Sabbatuccis These), wird noch einmal im Zeitalter des Kolonialismus als Praxis von Mission umgesetzt. Die mögliche—moderne—Alternative zu dieser Praxis ist selbst im Rahmen der Religionswissenschaft nicht einmal 'gedacht' worden: Ein 'religiöser Ensembleschutz' (ein Begriff der Denkmalpflege: nicht ein einzelnes Kunstwerk soll geschützt werden, sondern das Ensemble), die *Erhaltung* der Vielfalt fremder Religionen,—so, wie man (seit einiger Zeit zumindest) Kunst, Musik und Literatur von fremden Kulturen bewahrt. *Religionen*, fremde Religionen in ihrer Vielfalt, gehören dem Anschein nach noch nicht zu den bewahrenswerten Kulturgütern.

Ganz so rigide ist dieser Prozeß dann aber doch nicht abgelaufen: Das Inventar der antiken Religionen hat als 'Kunst' überlebt, nicht zufällig oder pragmatisch, sondern, wie sich das für das Imperium Romanum gehört, durch gesetzliche Anordnung: Eine Dekret des Theodosius (und seiner Mit-Regenten) schützte die antiken Bilder und Bauten von Gesetzes wegen,[32] wenn ihr künstlerischer Wert höher zu erachten war als ihr religiöser (*magis . . . artis pretio quam divinitate metienda*). Im Künstlerpolytheismus der Renaissance (wie es Michael Landmann genannt hat[33]) wird diese Desakralisierung durch Ästhetisierung, die die christlichen Kaiser praktizierten, wieder rückgängig gemacht: Mythologie und Kunst transportieren wieder die 'heidnischen Alternativen'. Ficino muß sich bereits dagegen verwahren, mit seinem Platonismus auch einen Polytheismus wieder einzuführen: *ne forte lectores ad priscum deorum daemonumque cultum . . . revocare viderer . . .*[34]

---

[32] Cancik 1986.

[33] Landmann 1963.

Für die Europäische Religionsgeschichte, wie ich sie in Umrissen vorgestellt habe, ist freilich nicht die Kunst zum privilegierten Medium religiöser Traditionen (und damit: religiöser Anachronismen) geworden, sondern die *Wissenschaften*, allen voran die Philologie, haben diese Funktionen übernommen. Das heißt, jener 'virtuelle Ensembleschutz', von dem ich gesprochen habe, wird de facto von den Wissenschaften ausgeübt: Alte, ferne und fremde Religionen bleiben, sofern sie philologisch-historisch (oder: in kunsthistorischen Reproduktionen) erfaßbar sind, präsent,—mit einer wiederum europäischen Präferenz, die man unter dem Schlagwort der 'Lesbarkeit von Religion' einordnen könnte. Wissenschaften als Medium von Religionen sind ein besonderes Phänomen der Europäischen Religionsgeschichte: Vom Corpus Hermeticum (bereits angesprochen) über die verschiedenen nordischen Sagas, den Pali-Kanon oder das Tibetische Totenbuch hat eine wissenschaftliche Rezeption im Regelfall auch eine 'nativistische' ausgelöst. Selbst fingierte oder fiktive Texte können dann 'religiöse Bewegungen' hervorrufen: James McPhersons (1730–1796) fingierte Übersetzungen lösten einen Ossianismus aus—und liefern den Grundstock für die aktuelle Keltomanie.

Die 'anderen Religionen' sind aber auch das konstitutive Problem einer Europäischen Religionsgeschichte. Das unterscheidet die Europäische Religionsgeschichte von anderen regionalen Religionsgeschichten: Die 'anderen' Religionen, unter welchen Oberbegriff auch immer, sei es aus der eigenen historischen Tradition oder aus der Ferne 'importiert', gehören zu einem jeweils aktuellen Orientierungsrahmen, Markt an Symbolystemen oder potentiellen Sinnangeboten. Mit der christlichen Singularisierung von Religion—ein Mensch kann immer nur eine Religion haben—und den Gegenbewegungen beginnt die spezifische Dynamik der Europäischen Religionsgeschichte. Einzelne haben sich einer Singularisierung von Fall zu Fall zu entziehen versucht: 'Ich bin ein Herr, groß genug um viele Götter zu verehren', soll Herzog Geza, Vater Stephans des Heiligen, in der Phase der Christianisierung seines (des späteren ungarischen)

---

[34] Brief an Martinus Uranius von 1492, p. 933.

Reiches gesagt haben. 'Als Dichter und Künstler bin ich Polytheist, Pantheist hingegen als Naturforscher, und eins so entschieden als das andere', nimmt Goethe in einem Brief an Jacobi von 1813 für sich in Anspruch, als 'sittlicher Mensch' schließlich sei er Christ. Der griechische Polytheismus stehe nicht im Gegensatz zum Monotheismus, sondern 'ist vielleicht seine geistvollste Form'[35] schreibt W.F. Otto im Jahre 1956 in Tübingen. Um solche souveräne Positionen vertreten zu können, muß man allerdings ein 'Herr' sein, oder Minister in Weimar, wenigstens aber Gräzistik-Professor in Tübingen.

Hier sind die Grenzen zwischen internen Professionalisierungsprozessen und einer Religionswissenschaft, die solche internen, einer Religion zuzuordnenden Prozesse, heißen sie nun Ritualistik, Philosophie oder Theologie, *zum Gegenstand hat*, deutlich erkennbar und theoretisch klar zu fassen. Der Soziologe Friedrich Tenbruck hat akzentuiert von 'der Religion im Zeitalter der Religionswissenschaften gesprochen' und 'auf die neue und eigenartige Lage' hingewiesen, daß die europäischen Religionswissenschaften (zu denen für ihn die Religionssoziologie und andere Teildisziplinen der Religionswissenschaft, *nicht* aber die Theologie gehören), die Menschen, die selbst kein Verhältnis zur Religion haben, mit den Mitteln und dem Anreiz versorgen, ständig über Religion zu sprechen. 'Die eigene Teilhabe an *einer* Religion wird überlagert oder ersetzt durch ein generelles Interesse an der Religion, das heißt an allen fremden Religionen. . . . Das Dauergespräch über Religion lebt heute nicht vom Interesse an der eigenen Religion, sondern vom Interesse an der Reflexion über eine fremde Religion. Dies ist die Wirkung der Religionswissenschaften . . .'[36]

Ein solche Religionswissenschaft im Rahmen von Kulturwissenschaft, die nicht in den Grenzen der Theologien oder von Einzel-Philologien verbleibt, zu konzipieren, hat Vorarbeiten erfordert und Konsequenzen gehabt. Das Tübinger Handbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe—der fünfte Band ist gerade in den Druck gegangen—versucht, eine Beschreibungssprache der Religionswissenschaft zu etablieren, die weder religiös, noch theologisch oder philosophisch, sondern kulturwissenschaftlich ist. In diesem Rahmen einer historischen und systematischen Kulturwissenschaft 'bleiben' religiöse, theologische, philosophische Aussagen auf der objektsprachtlichen Ebene, d.h. sie sind selbst Gegenstand von Religionswissenschaft (–und nicht andere Zugangsweisen neben der religionswissenschaftlichen). Die Komplexität des Phänomens 'Europäische Religionsgeschichte' selbst bleibt so erhalten,—und löst sich nicht in 'einen' Gegenstand und 'viele' konkurrierende Disziplinen auf.

---

[35] W.F. Otto 1956, 79.

[36] Tenbruck 1993, 67.

Mit dem Gegenstandsbereich und Programm 'Europäische Religionsgeschichte', das ich in einigen Perspektiven vorgetragen habe, ist dem Fach Religionswissenschaft nicht nur ein neues oder anders konstituiertes Gegenstandsfeld zugewiesen worden, sondern auf diese Weise zugleich auch eine veränderte Disziplinkonstellation angemahnt worden, die von den philologischen Fächern weg zu den historischen und Regionalwissenschaften hin geführt hat. Der komparatistische Ansatz des 19. Jahrhunderts, der Sprachgrenzen und Religionstypen in Verbindung gebracht hat, war ein Irrweg mit einem, aus heutiger Sicht gesehen, ideologischen Hintergrund. Die angesprochenen Neuorientierung hat auch dazu geführt, daß an der Universität Erfurt in den Jahren 1998 und 1999 vier religionswissenschaftliche Lehrstühle neu eingerichtet wurden, ein fünfter als Lehrstuhl für Kulturgeschichte des Christentums. Die Lehrstühle sind gemeinsam auf Komponenten der Europäischen Religionsgeschichte ausgerichtet: Systematische Religionswissenschaft und Europäische Polytheismen, Judentum, Östliches Christentum und Islam, schließlich Kulturgeschichte des Christentums. Vier der Lehrstühle waren jeweils als 'Lehrstuhl für Religionswissenschaft' mit einer zusätzlichen Spezialisierung ausgeschrieben worden: Das hat es in der Geschichte des Fachs in Deutschland noch nicht gegeben, in der bestenfalls ein Lehrstuhl für alle 'Weltreligionen' zuständig sein sollte,—das alte missionswissenschaftliche Schema! Europäische Religionsgeschichte ist als Studienrichtung inzwischen in Tübingen, in Erfurt als gemeinsames Programm der vier Lehrstühle, in Bayreuth und München eingeführt.

BIBLIOGRAPHIE

Anastos, M.-V., Pletho's Calendar and liturgy, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 4 (1948) 183–305.

Berger, P.L., A Market Model for the Analysis of Ecumenicity, *Social Research* 30 (1963) 77–93.

——, *Der Zwang zur Häresie. Die Religion in der pluralistischen Gesellschaft* (1980, 2.A. Freiburg 1992).

Borst, A., *Barbaren, Ketzer, und Artisten* (München 1988).

Cancik, H., Nutzen, Schmuck und Aberglaube. Ende und Wandlungen der römischen Religion im 4. und 5. Jahrhundert, in: H. Zinser (Hrsg.), *Der Untergang von Religionen* (Berlin 1986) 65–90.

——, Gladigow, B., Kohl, K.-H. (Hrsg.), *Handbuch Religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe* (HrwG), 5 Bde (Stuttgart 1988–2001).

Clemen, C., *Religionsgeschichte Europas*, 2 Bde, (Heidelberg 1926/31).

Douglas, M., *Ritual, Tabu und Körpersymbolik.* Sozialanthropologische Studien in Industriegesellschaft und Stammeskultur (Frankfurt/M 1981).

Fögen, M.Th., *Die Enteignung der Wahrsager.* Studien zum kaiserlichen Wissensmonopol in der Spätantike (Frankfurt 1993).

Gladigow, B., Chresthai theois—Orientierungs- und Loyalitätskonflikte in der griechischen Religion, in: Chr. Elsas, H.G. Kippenberg (Hrsg.), *Loyalitätskonflikte in der Religionsgeschichte* (Würzburg 1990) 237–251.

——, Europäische Nativismen und Bilder der Antike, in: H. Preißler, H. Seiwert (Hrsg.), *Gnosisforschung und Religionsgeschichte.* Festschrift Kurt Rudolph (Marburg 1994) 421–433.

——, Europäische Religionsgeschichte, in: H.G. Kippenberg, B. Luchesi (Hrsg.), *Lokale Religionsgeschichte* (Marburg 1995) 21–42.

——, Polytheismus. Akzente, Perspektiven und Optionen der Forschung, *Zeitschrift für Religionswissenschaft* 5 (1997) 59–77.

——, Polytheismen der Neuzeit, in: B. Köhler (Hrsg.), *Religion und Wahrheit. Religionsgeschichtliche Studien,* Festschrift für Gernot Wießner (Wiesbaden 1998a) 45–59.

——, Kulturen in der Kultur, in: H.W. Blanke, F. Jaeger, Th. Sandkühler (Hrsg.), *Dimensionen der Historik. Geschichtstheorie, Wissenschaftsgeschichte und Geschichtskultur heute.* Jörn Rüsen zum 60. Geburtstag (Köln 1998b) 53–66.

Harnack, A.v., *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten* (Leipzig 1924).

Kippenberg, H.G., *Die Entdeckung der Religionsgeschichte. Religionswissenschaft und Moderne* (München 1997).

Lambert, W., The historical development of the Mesopotamian pantheon: A Study in sophisticated polytheism, in: H. Goedicke, J. Roberts (Hrsg.), *Unity and Diversity* (Baltimore 1975).

Lanczkowski, G., *Religionsgeschichte Europas* (Freiburg 1971).

Landmann, H., *Pluralismus und Antinomie* (München/Basel 1963).

Marquard, O., Lob des Polytheismus. Über Monomythie und Polymythie, in: H. Poser (Hrsg.), *Philosophie und Mythos* (Berlin 1970) 40–58.

Miller, D.L., *The New Polytheism. Rebirth of the Gods and Goddesses* (New York 1974). Neuauflage mit einem Vorwort von H. Curbin, Dallas 1981.

Nilsson, M.P., *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, Bd. 1 (München ^{2}1955).

Otto, W.F., *Theophania. Der Geist der altgriechischen Religion* (Hamburg 1956).

Padberg, L.E. v., Odin oder Christus? Loyalitäts- und Orientierungskonflikte in der frühmittelalterlichen Christianisierungsepoche, *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 77 (1995) 249–278.

Peterson, E., *Monotheismus als politisches Problem. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der politischen Theologie im Imperium Romanum* (Leipzig 1935, ND in: ders., *Theologische Traktate,* München 1951).

Rudolph, K., *Geschichte und Probleme der Religionswissenschaft* (Leiden 1992).

Sabbatucci, D., *Kultur und Religion,* HrwG 1 (Stuttgart 1988) 43–58.

——, *Politeismo II,* Corso di Storia delle Religioni nell' anno acc. 1989–90.

Snell, B., *Die Entdeckung des Geistes* (Hamburg 1955).

Taubes, J., Zur Konjunktur des Polytheismus, in: K.H. Bohrer (Hrsg.), *Mythos und Moderne. Begriff und Bild einer Rekonstruktion* (Frankfurt 1983) 457–470.

Tenbruck, F., Die Religion im Maelstrom der Reflexion, *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 1993, Sonderheft Religion und Kultur, 31–67.

Versnel, H.S., *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion, I. Ter Unus. Isis, Dionysos, Hermes: Three Studies in Henotheism* (Studies in Greek and Roman Religion 6, I, Leiden 1990, ^{2}1998).

White, H., *Metahistory. Die historische Einbildungskraft im 19. Jahrhundert in Europa* (1973, Frankfurt 1991).

Wokart, N., 'Hellenische Theologie'. Die Religionsreform des Georgios Gemistos Plethon, in: R. Faber, R. Schlesier (Hrsg.), *Die Restauration der Götter* (Würzburg 1988) 183–197.

SHAPING THE TEXT: INNOVATION AND AUTHORITY IN GRAECO-EGYPTIAN MALIGN MAGIC

Richard Gordon

The corpus of the Graeco-Egyptian 'magical papyri', first created by Karl Preisendanz in the late 1920s, abounds in contrasts.[1] We can distinguish between texts in Demotic, Coptic, Aramaic and Greek, between pagan and Christian texts, between protective, divinatory, erotic, vindicative and malign (or aggressive) magic, all of which have their own generic rules. We can also distinguish on the one hand between highly elaborate recipes, of which the finest examples are perhaps the three variants of the same *praxis* put together in the 'Eighth Book of Moses' (*P.Leid.* J 395 = *PGM* XIII),[2] or the 'Ritual of the Cat' in *P.Mimaut* (*P.Louvre* 2396 = *PGM* III 1–164),[3] but which are characteristic of most of the magical texts acquired by Giovanni Anastasi in the course of his activities as a collector,[4] and, on the other, the rather perfunctory, or at any rate brief and unelaborated, spells which seem to be typical of the fragmentary receptaries recovered later and (re-)published as *Supplementum Magicum* nos. 70–100.[5] Another contrast again may be drawn between the receptaries or formularies on the one hand, which contain a whole variety of bare or 'inert' exemplary texts,[6] and applied magic on the other, that is, mainly malign or erotic texts which have been written out onto a material surface, a *Textträger*, and, after being 'activated' by means of a ritual, buried or otherwise disposed of at a place of some symbolic significance in order to effect specific changes in the real world.[7] With the well-known exception of a single elaborate *agogimon*, a recipe for bringing a woman to a man for sexual purposes, which is now known in five versions, the surviving activated texts in the Graeco-Egyptian tradition are not based directly on recipes known from the receptaries.[8] There is, however, a clear family resemblance between them, attested above all by the types of divine powers invoked, the use of similar *onomata barbara* (the 'meaningless' words, mainly in sunken Egyptian, employed as sacred names), and the recourse to *charaktêres* (letters or perhaps 'words' denoted in non-standard script).

---

[1] Preisendanz 1928–31 published and translated 121 texts or fragments, including 18 Christian ones, distributed under 52 + 12 numbers; the ill-fated vol. 3, whose plates were destroyed by bombing in 1940, contained a further 21 (+ 4 Christian) texts, 5 ostraka and 2 texts on wooden plaques. All 146 texts/fragments were included in the revised edition published by A. Henrichs (Preisendanz and Henrichs 1973–4), to which reference is made in this article. Preisendanz-Henrichs' non-Christian texts on papyrus, listed under 81 entries, together with 49 new texts and the three major collections of recipes in Demotic, are translated into English by diverse hands in Betz 1986/1993. I use the abbreviation *PGM* to denote the Greek texts in Preisendanz and Henrichs 1973–4, and PDM to denote the translations of Demotic texts by Janet Johnson in Betz 1986/93.

[2] On the composition of this document, see Smith 1984; 1986. Daniel 1991, x–xi notes that a second scribe or compiler took over from around line 935.

[3] On this text see Harrauer 1987, 12–53; Merkelbach and Totti 1990, 81–102; Fauth 1995, 56–74.

[4] Recent accounts in Fowden 1986, 168–71; Brashear 1995, 3402–05. The cache found in Egyptian Thebes, which Anastasi acquired before March 1828, included the 'Great Paris' codex (= *PGM* IV), *P.Brit.Mus.* XLVI (= *PGM* V), *P.Brit.Mus. P.Leid.* J 383 + *P.Brit.Mus.* 10070 (the London-Leiden Demotic papyrus = PDM xiv), *P.Leid.* J 384 and 395 (= *PGM* XII–XIII), but also two alchemical papyri. Anastasi's other texts, one at least of which came from Memphis, but whose provenances are mostly unknown, include: the two Berlin papyri (*PGM* I–II), the Mimaut papyrus (*PGM* III), *P.Brit.Mus.* CXXI (*PGM* VII), and two further Demotic papyri, *P.Brit.Mus.* 10588 (*PGM* LXI/PDM lxi) and *P.Louvre* E 3229 (PDM Supplement).

---

[5] Daniel and Maltomini 1990–92, 2: 91–275. These texts are assigned dates ranging from II/I^{a} cent. BC to V/VI^{p}. It must of course be allowed that many of these are very lacunate, and that e.g. their nos. 96–98 (V/VI^{p}) may have been on a considerable scale. Moreover, perfunctory texts are not unknown in the Anastasi texts, e.g. those assembled in *PGM* III 467–94; IV 467–74/830–34 (Homeric citations); 2140–44; 2943–66; V 54–59; PDM xiv 706–49, and virtually all those between 911–1218 (many of them medico-magical).

[6] Frankfurter 1997, 116f. rightly emphasises the variety of recipes to be found in just one receptary, *P.Leid.* J 384^{v} = *PGM* XII.

[7] Preisendanz makes no reference to this distinction in the preface to the first edition, probably because of the project's origin in A. Dieterich's projected re-edition of the Great Paris magical codex (*PGM* IV) for the Teubner series, which was never published because of his sudden death in 1908 (Preisendanz and Henrichs 1973–4, 1: viii). But it clearly underlays his organisation of the materials available prior to 1931, and he used it explicitly in his account of the texts in the Preface to vol. 3 (Preisendanz and Henrichs 1973–74, 2: ix).

One of the oddest features of these studies is the distinction, which solely has relevance to modern sub-disciplinary boundaries, between (activated) texts on papyrus and those on more durable surfaces, mainly lead: Preisendanz intended 'Papyri Graecae Magicae' quite literally (except that he eventually included a number of ostraka, i.e. texts on sherds, and on wood [see n. 1]), and therefore excluded many relevant activated texts, which happen to have been written on lead, the decipherment of which counts as 'epigraphy' not 'papyrology' (cf. Bodel 2001, 2f., taking a relaxed view of the matter). The same practice is (understandably) followed by Betz 1986/1993, but rightly discontinued by Daniel and Maltomini 1990–92; cf. Brashear 1995, 3443–46. To be fair to Preisendanz, however, it must be said that he was quite aware of the artificiality of the separation, and had intended himself to (re-)edit the defixiones on lead—even though many of them derived from traditions of cursing very different from that associated with the practice of the Graeco-Egyptian magical papyri (Preisendanz 1930; 1935; 1969; cf. Jordan 1985). In this article, I include texts on papyrus and on other materials equally.

[8] *PGM* IV 296–466 with the parallels discussed by Martinez 1991; note esp. his table in Fig. 1, p. 17. One other clear case of an activated text almost identical to

Any of these contrasts could be the focus of closer enquiry. But in this article I wish to examine some of the evidence for innovation in the corpus in relation to an issue recently raised in a learned and wide-ranging article by David Frankfurter on the impact of Hellenistic culture upon religious life in late antique Egypt, and in particular the class or group of ritual experts.[9] I am glad to offer something on a magical theme to this collection of essays in honour of Professor Henk Versnel, who has contributed so much to the recent reflorescence of the topic, in relation to the issue of generic rules for *defixiones*,[10] to the language of curses,[11] and not least to the theoretical issue of the relation between magic and religion.[12]

Stereotype appropriation

Starting from the modern perception of culture-contact between Greeks and Egyptians as a dynamic process of selective assimilation or appropriation, Frankfurter argues that the corpus of magical papyri enables us to glimpse new developments in priestly activity and priestly self-conception, singling out two areas in particular. It is well-known that the largest single group of recipes in the magical papyri is for divination, mainly dreams, lecanomancies ('reading' a shallow dish filled with water and a little olive-oil) and *phw-ntr* (direct encounters with a god). The compilers of the receptaries developed new techniques of revelation specifically for private enlightenment. Whereas the classic Egyptian *ph-ntr* was pursued as part of a defined priestly role, the new techniques offered the consultant more abstract and elevated spiritual goods, wisdom, or mystical experience.[13] The

---

a surviving receptary is Audollent 1904, No. 188 ~ *PGM* LVIII (Jordan 1976, 129), which is interesting, since the receptary was found in Egypt, the activated text in Rome or Latium.

[9] Frankfurter 2000; an earlier version of the points that concern me here appeared in id. 1997, 130–35; 1998, 198–237.

[10] E.g. Versnel 1987, 1991a.

[11] Versnel 1996, 1998.

[12] Versnel 1991b.

[13] Frankfurter 2000, 180–82.

second area is erotic magic. As with divination, this belonged to the traditional expertise of Egyptian lector-priests (*hry-hbt*, meaning '(he who) possesses—the ritual book'), but the number of erotic spells in the corpus of 'magical papyri' suggests that there was a very lively market in erotic magic in the Roman period to which the priests catered by presenting themselves as 'masters of love magic'.[14] In creating these innovations and adaptations in their ritual practice, the priests were responding not so much to an objectively changed situation as to their own idea of their new situation.[15] This idea was essentially a reception of the Graeco-Roman view of the Egyptian priest as a wonder-worker, a guru, a fount of wisdom and power.[16] It was this reception or appropriation of a Graeco-Roman stereotype which more than anything inspired the reconstruction of the traditions of the 'House of Life' so as to become simultaneously more exotic and more familiar to an alien clientele. 'Stereotype appropriation is a dynamic process of buying into, internalizing, and exploiting the roles offered by a dominant culture'.[17] From this perspective, the Egyptian priests who imparted information to Herodotus were merely early exponents of a widespread skill in exploiting Egyptomania, that can be traced through Manetho, the creation of the cult of Sarapis and Chaeremon's account of the Egyptian priest as lover of wisdom. The Egyptian priesthood joins a company well-represented in the modern world, the peddlers of oriental wisdom more or less subtly adapted to the requirements of the western groups liable or willing to be recruited.[18]

There is no doubt that the notion of stereotype appropriation has attractions as a means of accounting for the changes that seem to have taken place in the practice of Egyptian magic, as these are represented to us in the magical papyri. Most immediately, it starts from the premise that these priestly actors—Greek-speaking actors—were familiar with the concrete realities of their cultural environment in Graeco-Roman Egypt, which are recognized as those of a colonial situation. It gives these actors a certain solidity, a profile. Secondly, it locates the temple clergy in a negotiated space between their own priestly traditions and market niches which they are able to exploit. Thirdly, it tries to address the striking differences between the spells of the magical papyri compared with the evidence for earlier periods: whole areas of traditional Egyptian magic, above all medical practice (snake-bites, scorpion stings) and exorcism, the ritual maintenance of cosmic order, the ritual destruction of enemies, the protection of the dead, protection from dangerous spirits in the form of crocodiles, hippopotamuses and so on, have disappeared virtually without trace. What survive into the Graeco-Roman period are mainly the magical techniques.[19]

---

[14] Ibid. 177–80. See also Faraone 1999, 25f., 33f. (where he wrongly states that there is no evidence for love magic in Egypt prior to the Hellenistic period).

[15] In this article I take over Frankfurter's identification of the practitioners who created the magical papyri with the priests of the 'House of Life' (following Koenig 1994, 19f. he identifies them more precisely with the (*hry-hbt*) *hry-tp*, the chief lector-priests, for which I see little justification). The main reason for doing so is the highly literate, learned, quality of many of the recipes in the corpus. But one should remember Sauneron's point that in classical Egypt magical skills were so widespread in the population that it is difficult to identify 'the' magician: two general words were available, $hk^{3}y$ 'he who disposes of the force of *heka*', and $s^{3}w$, 'enchanters, those who dispense *sa*, magical protection' (1966, 33f.).

[16] On images of late-antique magicians, see now Janovitz 2001.

[17] Frankfurter ibid. 174.

[18] See the useful overview in Reller et al. 1993, 617–818. Frankfurter himself evokes the staged authenticity of various Native American and Amazonian groups (ibid. 173f.).

Though it cannot be proved that the self-image of the creators of the magical papyri was not due to the assimilation of Graeco-Roman expectations of Egyptian magicians, some scepticism is nevertheless in order. Frankfurter presents the situation as if there were only one significant stereotype, the stereotype of the powerful *magos* reflected in a variety of texts, mostly rather late, from the esoteric to the romance. But the dominant external view of Egyptian religion in the Principate was negative, and focused upon the absurdity of the cult of animals, and the corruption and deceit of the Egyptian priesthood. It is generally accepted that it was the Graeco-Roman hostility to the temple cult of animals which led the Egyptians to insist upon it as the particular mark of their separate identity, and an important rallying-point in negotiations with the ruling power. Colonial stereotypes could indeed be resisted.[20] Three other examples also suggest that in other respects Egyptian attitudes to Graeco-Roman culture were not necessarily as compliant as Frankfurter suggests. One, the case of the Graeco-Egyptian terracottas, is quoted by Frankfurter himself: though Greek iconographic stereotypes rapidly pushed out traditional forms of e.g. Isis suckling Harpokrates, the subjects that continued to be represented are overwhelmingly Egyptian—not merely in the choice of divinities but also in the representation of cult and dance.[21] An analogous case is that of the magical amulets in semi-precious stone: in this case, the manufacture of traditional Egyptian amulets, for example scarabs, pilasters and Isiac knots, virtually ceases in the Late period; and when Greek choices of stones, amuletic forms and cutting techniques were taken over by temple craftsmen in the Principate, they created new, almost exclusively Egyptian types.[22] At a different level, the example of Plutarch's *De Iside et Osiride* suggests that a highly complex negotiation between conceptions of divinity, myth and cult took place which can hardly be reduced to the formula of stereotype appropriation: if Greek narrative expectations of myth were positively taken over by Egyptian clergy, it is no less true that the latter were never satisfied unless they had the last word in the matter of interpretation.

---

[19] Cf. Sauneron 1966, 36–48, more fully in Ritner 1993. I do not intend here to thematize the issue of whether, or in what degree, we are justified in applying the term 'magic' to this corpus. Tacitly following Gardiner (1915), for whom Egyptian magic denoted religious acts performed for personal or private rather than public ends, Preisendanz took them as evidence of a late-antique syncretistic form of this tradition (1950; 1956). Some more recent writers, notably Ritner (1995, 59f.) and Frankfurter (1997, 119–21; 1998, 219–21; 2000, 166–74), have urged that we should not use the word 'magic' in connection with Egypt because of its largely pejorative associations. In my view, we are entitled to use the term 'magical' (if not 'magic') in much the same way as we use 'oriental cults', to signify a body of material traditionally so termed, without necessarily assenting to the preconceptions which gave rise to these terms at the beginning of the last century. The English word 'magic' after all has a much wider semantic range than the narrow denotations represented by Enlightenment rationalists and the armchair anthropologists. For good balanced discussion of Egyptian *ḥk*^{3}, see Kákosy 1977, Ritner 1993, 14–28, Koenig 1994, 269–305; Étienne 2000.

Moreover, there is good evidence that the temple clergy, like other magical practitioners, were no strangers to innovation and adaptation.[23] One example is that of astrology, which, by routes now impossible to recover, was rapidly assimilated from Babylonia in the Late Period and under the first two Ptolemies, with very little sign of having been mediated by the Greeks. Though the early astrological handbooks, which are but fragmentarily preserved in later treatises, imply the public institutions of the Ptolemies, these are scarcely different from the world of kings and palace-temple bureaucracies typical of the Fertile Crescent.[24] The central role played in this transfer by the temple clergy is clear from the number of early pseudepigraphic treatises under the names of Hermes Trismegistos, Nechepso and Petosiris.[25] The second innovation is that of lecanomancy, an originally Babylonian technique which seems to have been borrowed during the Late Period. But in the course of the transfer a decisive change took place. Instead of the fixed meanings for specific classes of persons associated in the Babylonian texts with particular whorls and shapes assumed by the floating oil—as in the example, 'Wenn das Öl viel Blasen bildet: für den Kranken: (Weh)geschrei; für das Heer auf dem Feldzuge: (Weh)geschrei'[26]—the Egyptian diviners created a surface intended to be seen *through*, down to spirits who would themselves provide answers, positive or negative, to specific questions. There is no reason to suppose that either of these innovations during the Late Period and the early Ptolemaic period were responses to a pre-existing colonial stereotype: but they do suggest that the priests of the House of Life were very much aware of the advantage of new types of divination as adjuncts to their traditional magical resources. Frankfurter suggests that what the priests offered during the Roman period was 'mystical' experience; but can point to no evidence for this save the very exceptional case of the 'Mithras Liturgy' (*PGM* IV 475–829) and the hardly relevant description of Lucius' first initiation in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (11.23). The normal run of divinatory recipes, for example receiving dreams, oracular answers or direct visitations from a god, have nothing to do with elevated private experiences but with the practitioner's own requirements for (fore-)knowledge, for insight, to enable him to cope with the demands of clients. Related to these are recipes for acquiring spirit assistants. Moreover, there existed in Egypt, in the form of the stories of Djadjaemonkh and Djidi in the Westcar papyrus, Meryê in P. Vandier, or Si-Osire, Horus-son-of-Paneshe in the story of Setne-Khamwas, and several others, an indigenous model of the powers and capacities of the great magician, which clearly played an important part in forming the claims we find in the magical papyri.[27] To my mind, the 'stereotype' sketched by Frankfurter, insofar as it was a unified one, was at least as much the creation of the priests of the House of Life as it was of Graeco-Roman culture, and employed by them as a tool in an attempt to assert at any rate their continuing magical power even if they could no longer ordinarily enjoy much socio-political power.[28] Despite the current fashion for post-colonial theory, Edward Saïd's 'orientalism' is not the only model we might think of; and the *bricoleur* may know exactly what he is looking for.

---

[20] Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984, 1860–64; 1955–62.

[21] Cf. Weber 1914; Dunand 1990; Török 1995.

[22] Cf. Bonner 1952; Delatte and Derchain 1964; Philipp 1986; Śliwa 1989. The language employed is of course also Greek.

[23] 'Magicians do make a pretence of observing with scrupulous care what they like to maintain are ancient rituals. In reality, magic is innovative and dynamic': Dickie 1999, 184; see now Dickie 2001.

---

[24] Cumont 1937, 25–59.

[25] W. and H.G. Gundel 1966, 9–40. Several Hellenistic Egyptian texts show familiarity with Babylonian astronomic and divinatory procedures, and there is clear evidence of contacts between Babylonian and Egyptian priest-diviners already in the Late Period, cf. Gordon 1997a, 140f.

[26] Pettinato 1966, 2: 65 + 72, Text II §51.

In the remainder of this paper I want to pursue this theme of the claim to magical power, which in my view did not have to be, indeed could hardly be, directed towards the magicians' clientele. It was rather a self-regarding matter, if one likes, a personal re-assurance of the individual's prowess, a re-assurance which may (though I do not insist on this) have become more necessary as the institutional framework of the 'House of Life' grew less secure and the priests were more often likely to practice their craft privately. I propose to look at two quite different aspects of the matter, the interest of (some) practitioners in reflecting upon the source of their power, and the creation of new techniques for adding to the force of activated texts. In relation to the first, the only evidence that I know of is speculation about the power of names, in the special sense of *onomata barbara.*

The magical power of names

Speculation about how incantation might work is doubtless as old as attempts to use language to help effect marvellous changes in the world. The most explicit account in the Classical period of how incantation might work is of course Gorgias' in the *Helen.* His explicitly psychological account, 'inspired incantations consisting of words (αἱ ἔνθεοι διὰ λόγων ἐπῳδαί) bring on pleasure, dissipate pain', seems to abandon any claim to be able to explain how incantation might halt bleeding: it envisages the problem of incantation exclusively as one of persuasion, which is intended to alter a mental state.[29] It implies a process of rationalisation, which implicitly denies the possibility of words—'mere words'—affecting changes directly in the world: words require an audience, and the audience is the mind of the individual patient. Incantation becomes a special form of rhetoric, intended to 'persuade the mind'.[30] Whether or not practitioners of magical medicine would have agreed, and whether or not indeed they could even provide an explicit account of incantation, from the fifth century BC the dominant view within Greek, and Roman, society seems to have been that incantation was directed towards the mind, though not necessarily to the intellect, rather to some faculty capable of being affected by heightened phonic effects. This view was based on the assumption that the primary form of incantation was in the loose sense medical, and that it was performed in the presence of a patient.

---

[27] See Sauneron 1966, 34; Koenig 1994, 38–47; Gordon 1997b, 70–78.

[28] On the distinction between social and magical power as considerations for magicians, Lieban 1967, 36f.

This essentially acoustic view continued, in a form specifically limited to powerful 'names' (*onomata*), to be available into Late Antiquity.[31] Thus we find Origen appealing to a similar theory in attempting to account for the possible benefit of apparently pointless lists of city-names in the Old Testament, in this case *Joshua* 15.13–63, which consists very largely of obscure Hebrew names, which no contemporary Christian could have made much of. Origen's answer to the question, what can be the value of such lists for the ordinary listener?, is that the sounds themselves have a beneficial effect upon the listener:

> Just as incantations have a certain physical influence (δύναμίν τινα... φυσικήν), and the person to whom it is directed, even if he is unconscious of it, is somehow affected by the spell, according to the character of its sounds, either for evil or for healing the body or mind, so you must understand that the utterance of proper names of the Bible is more potent than any incantation. For there are certain powers within us, of which the better sort are nourished by such 'incantations', being naturally related (συγγενεῖς) to them, and, even though

---

[29] DK 82 F11 §10, the best discussion of which remains, in my view, Verdenius 1981.

[30] Cf. earlier [Aeschylus], *PV* 172f., where the Titan declares that Zeus will not enchant him 'with the honey-tongued incantations of persuasion', καὶ μ' οὔτι μελιγλώσσοις πειθοῦς/ἐπαοιδαῖσιν θέλξει.

[31] See in general Hirschle 1976; Dillon 1985; Janovitz 1990, 360–65; Graf 1997, 127–32. 'Names' include main names and epithets, in any tongue.

> we are not aware of it, these powers apprehend what is uttered—their ability to assist us in our lives increases within us.[32]

This view seems to assume that individual sounds, irrespective of language, have an acoustico-moral quality, which is transformed directly on apperception by the ear into a corresponding physical effect. While it seems to draw upon the ultimately Theophrastan claim that pleasure and pain alike arise from sense perception, and that the one and the other arise in accordance with the degree of correspondence between stimulation and the organ of sense,[33] it goes beyond this position in according incantation a special position independent of direct sense-perception, since Origen specifically claims that the patient/victim need not be aware of what is going on. Plotinus' roughly contemporary claim, that incantation works through mundane *sympatheia* and can affect solely the irrational part of the soul, is analogous.[34]

But elsewhere Origen has a different account of the force of the magical word, sometimes in combination with the acoustico-moral theory. The argument seems to show awareness of contemporary Platonic speculation about the magical efficacy of divine names, which in part goes back ultimately to the *Cratylus*,[35] but is certainly also indebted to speculation by ritual experts in the different traditions of the high Near-Eastern cultures. Human languages do not have a purely natural origin but also a divine one. Part of the proof of this is the incantatory practice of magicians. For they claim that if the names 'whose nature it is to be powerful in some particular language' are translated into another language, they cease to have the effect they had in their original form:

> Thus, if we were to translate the name 'Israel' into Greek or another language, we would effect nothing. But if we keep it as it is, linking it on to those words with which experts in these matters have thought fit to connect it, then something would happen in accordance with the

---

[32] Origen, *Hom. 1–26 in Jos.* 20.1 (Greek text in *Philocalia* 12, p. 388 ed. Harl). Dillon (1985, 214) takes κατεπᾳδόμενος in the first sentence as middle, 'he who utters (incantations)', but this seems to make nonsense of the rest of the sentence. I follow Harl in taking it as passive.

[33] *Sens.* 32–3, with Lippman 1964, 165.

[34] Plotinus, *Enn.* 4.4.43.

[35] Origen cites Plato, *Phlb.* 12c (Socrates on the names of the gods) both at *Cels.* 1.25 and 4.48; Damascius, *In Phlb.* 24 Westerink cites Plato, *Cra.* 391 de in the same connection. Note also Proclus, *In Parm.* p. 853.1–3; *In Crat.* 71, p. 29–35 Pasquali.

> power which such invocations are said to possess when a formula of this kind is pronounced.[36]

It seems clear that in such passages Origen, who believed that the original (Adamic) language was Hebrew,[37] is alluding to (but also misrepresenting) mystical claims about the inherent power attached to sacred names in the Jewish tradition, with which he had extensive familiarity:

> The names of the [three fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob] are so powerful when linked with the name of God that the formula 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob' is used not only by members of the Jewish nation in their prayers to God and when they exorcise demons, but also by almost all those who deal in magic and spells. For in magical spells it is often to be found that God is invoked by this formula, and that in spells against daemons His name is used in close connection with the names of these men.[38]

No distinction is made between 'use' and 'mention': such names are powerful and effective in an unlimited sense.[39] Elsewhere, however, he cites analogous views among Egyptian experts in so-called magic, ἡ καλουμένη μαγεία.[40] One of their doctrines is that names acquire, or are able to unleash, their power, if they are repeated in an imbricated or complex sequence;[41] another that each language disposes of words which are the names of daemonic powers which have power to perform certain highly specific tasks: the Egyptian language for example contains words which are the names of powers specific to Egypt, the Persian language powers specific to Persia and so on.[42]

---

[36] Origen, *Cels.* 5.45; 1,25; cf. the injunction of the Chaldaean Oracles ὀνόματα βάρβαρα μήποτ' ἀλλάξῃς, 'under no circumstances are you to alter the *onomata barbara*' (§150 des Places), with Michael Psellos' commentary on the phrase in *Exeg.orac. Chald.* (= Migne, *PG* 122, 1132c, repr. des Places p. 169f.).

[37] Origen, *Hom. 1–28 in Num.* 11.4.

[38] *Cels.* 4.43. For Origen's contacts with Jewish mystical milieux, de Lange 1976; Blowers 1988; on Jewish belief in the power of the divine name, note Lauterbach 1930/1; Urbach 1987, 124–34; Rohrbacher-Sticker 1991/2; on Hebrew as a sacred language in antiquity, Sawyer 1999.

[39] Janowitz 1990, 362.

[40] *Cels.* 1.24. On the tacit rules governing sequences of *onomata*, which of course also occur in the Hermetic corpus and the Nag Hammadi texts, see recently Miller 1986; Crippa 1995; Fauth 1995, 34–120; in Arabic magic, Winkler 1930, 29f., 1935; in Buddhist practice, Hauer 1927. The list compiled by Brashear 1995, 3576–603, though extremely useful, is by no means complete either with regard to individual words nor with modern suggestions as to their 'real' meaning.

[41] Reading συνυφοῦς with Früchtel and Borret.

[42] Ibid. This turns out to be a reference to the decans in charge of each part

That Egyptian magical practitioners were interested in names of power from other, particularly Jewish, traditions is familiar enough from the use they made of them.[43] Celsus implies that this cultural borrowing also led to, or was accompanied by, a desire to make explicit the rôle of *onomata* in their own practice rather than simply acquire a technique of using them (*onomata* play a much greater part in the technique of the Greek papyri than either in traditional Egyptian magic or in the Demotic papyri). And he also suggests that Egyptian magical practitioners thereby became aware of themselves as members of an international élite of ritual experts.

About half a century later, Iamblichus, replying to Porphyry's rejection of theurgic divination in the *Letter to Anebo*, developed two arguments in the same connection, arguments which have every appearance of being derived from an Egyptian priestly milieu.[44]

First, he claims that there are two classes of 'meaningless names', those whose meanings have been revealed, and those which have not. The gods know the true meaning of all 'meaningless names', but they know it in ways ungraspable by human beings, apprehending their meanings directly, without recourse to the sign- and sound-conventions required by human beings—the meanings of many *onomata barbara* are simply beyond us, simply too majestic. But the second class, whose meanings have been revealed to us, both give us an insight into the essence and power of the gods, and allow us to reach outward towards spiritual union with them. The second argument relates to the fact that the most powerful 'names' are barbaric, foreign, not Greek. The reason for this is that some peoples, such as the Babylonians and the Egyptians, are holy peoples, and their languages are truly primitive, aboriginal, and so especially appropriate for worshipping the gods. It is therefore only right and proper to address them thus. These languages moreover preserve the original names of the gods in an unchanged form. These arguments owe something to the neo-platonist view that the religions of the 'wise

---

of the body, 'by invoking whom they heal the sufferings of the various parts', that is, the doctrine of astral melothesia: *Cels.* 8.58.

[43] Preisendanz 1955; Fernández Marcos 1985; cf. also the claim to know names in Hebrew, e.g. *PGM* III 119; IV 3085. The Syrian name *Bêl/Bal* is found occasionally, e.g. *PGM* IV 1010; Daniel and Maltomini 1990–92 no. 39 l. 9 (with comm.) (Egypt); Jordan 1996, 117 §IIIb2 with p. 119 (Carthage).

[44] Iamblichus, *Myst.* 7.4f. (pp. 254.12–256.17). Iamblichus assumed his second persona, that of the Egyptian Abammon, for this work (see Michael Psellos' preliminary note, p. 38 des Places).

nations' come closest to the *Urreligion* which most faithfully worships God,[45] but they share with some of the tractates of the *Corpus Hermeticum* the view that Egyptian religion is as superior to others just as the land is dearer to the gods.[46]

These claims, refracted as they are through neo-platonist sources, undoubtedly present a distorted view of Egyptian priestly speculation.[47] And 'names' constitute only part of the incantatory practice of Egyptian magic.[48] But it is certain that *onomata* are frequently said to be the 'true' or 'authentic' (genuine, authoritative) names of divinities or powers, which tends to confirm Origen and Iamblichus in general terms.[49] But I think it is fair to conclude that, at any rate in relation to the use of *onomata*, the priests were not interested in producing themselves in terms of a Greek stereotype, but in discussion, in contributing their own perceptions of the power of names, and adjusting, even extending, them in the light of others' views. They see themselves as experts on their own ground, even if, as is obvious, Iamblichus' presentation of the case is permeated by the language of late Platonism. Secondly, the role of the Greeks in this discussion was a minor one: the Egyptian priests' preferred horizon of comparison ignored the names of the *Greek* gods entirely, in favour of the more relevant experience of other ritual experts, magicians, in Israel, Babylonia and 'Persia'. Their magical practice may have drawn in varying degrees on Greek religious sources, above all hymns, but subjectively they inhabited a sort of Foucauldian heterotopia, composed of the learned ritual experts of the Wise Nations.

---

[45] See now G. Boys-Stones 2001.

[46] On Iamblichus and Hermeticism, see Fowden 1986, 131–41; on Hermetic 'nationalism', ibid. 13–44.

[47] Traditionally, *hk*^{3} was often directly associated with the spoken word, and spells might be termed *mdw-ntr*, words of god. In one of the accounts of creation in the Coffin texts, Heka ermerges from the mouth of Re-Atum before Hu (the creative Word), §17.

[48] Neither Origen nor Iamblichus says anything about some other obvious features of incantation, e.g. the more or less elaborate cosmological and horological schemes, or the deployment of mythological references in *historiolae*. Moreover, even with respect to phonic and acoustic resources, they omit not only the intonation of vowels, which was a standard and time-consuming occupation of the Egyptian priesthood, but also the range of animal and other noises, the popping and hissing, bellowing and roaring, which are sometimes prescribed in the receptaries, notably in the Mithras Liturgy and in the '8th Book of Moses' (*PGM* XIII). Graf 1997, 129 seems to take these also as a form of *onomata*.

[49] *PGM* I 36; V 115; IX 13f.; XIII 621f. (both words); PDM xiv 686 = *PGM* XIVc 21; Daniel and Maltomini 1990–92 no. 45 l. 28; with Graf 1997, 128.

The creation of new techniques

It seems clear that Egyptian priestly interest in the functioning of *onomata*, insofar as we have any authentic knowledge of it through Origen, Iamblichus, Proclus and the Chaldaean Oracles, relates to a purely 'internal' matter, the explanation of the power of magical incantation. Such speculation provided an implicit justification for the arduous task of learning to combine nominally fixed phrases in sunken Egyptian (*logoi*), regular epithets for specific divinities, which may include Greek, and extempore, 'spontaneous' utterances, which are the main elements of the sequences we find in the papyri, as in the 'third-day compulsion' to invoke the power of the constellation of the Great Wain in a recipe in the Great Paris codex: αντβερωυρτωρ ερεμνεθηχωρ/χνυχιροαντωρ μενελεοχευ· ηεσ/σιπο δωτηρ ευαρτω γου πι φυλακὴ/ωμαλαμινγορ μαντατονχα.[50] Such questions have nothing to do with a Greek stereotype of the magician. No less internal to the private world of the magician are the innovations in practice to which we now turn.

Despite the clear evidence for generic differences, spells in the magical papyri generally contain two elements. They consist of (1) the preparation of *materia magica*, and (2) an accompanying incantation, whose function is either to activate the inherent properties of the material, or to invoke a named divinity and his or her metamorphs. Although the balance between these elements is variable, we may call this the tacit or implicit model of good practice, a model whose appropriateness was learned by practitioners in the course of their training.[51]

As an illustration, we may take a forcible erotic spell from the Demotic London-Leiden papyrus, PDM xiv 636–69, which is apparently intended to cause a prostitute to fall in love with a client, assumed to be identical with the practitioner. It involves the ritual preparation of a scarab-beetle, which is to be held in the hand up to the Sun, drowned in the milk of a black cow, and then dried.[52]

---

[50] *PGM* IV 1296–99.

[51] 'Généralement ces formules "à dire" sont suivies de quelque chose qui est "à faire", c'est-à-dire le rite manuel': Koenig 1994, 57; cf. Étienne 2000, 46–51. Ritner 1993, 67, goes too far in claiming, 'It is in the rite—and not the spell—that the essence of Egyptian magic is to be sought'; compare Borghouts 1978, ix, 'The spells are the *verbalized* core matter of the rite'.

[52] Recto col. XXI, lines 10–43; briefly discussed by Richman (1940/46, 54). On

The practitioner severs the scarab longitudinally and manufactures a pill from the right half, pounded up with apple-seeds and his urine or sweat and the heated nail-parings of his right hand and foot. The left half of the scarab is then made into an amulet, which is to be bound to one's left arm. When all is ready, the pill is slipped into a cup of wine, and given the woman to drink down before sexual intercourse takes place. But these ritual steps are in themselves meaningless. Each significant stage of the process, the presentation of the beetle, the drowning, the cooking, the dropping into the wine, is accompanied by a specific incantation which refers the action to a divine context, mainly by means of *historiolae*, allusions to mythical events, but also incorporating subsidiary devices such as 'false accusation' or 'slander'.[53]

Although some details of the ritual preparation of the *materia magica*, particularly the apple-seeds, the heating of the nail-parings in a vessel without oil or water, and the right-left contrast,[54] have a clear semantic or ostensive value within an erotic context, the aim of the rite is properly signalled by the incantations: 'I am sending you against NN whom NN bore, to strike her from her heart to her belly, from her belly to her intestines, from her intestines to her womb'; 'until fire is put after her heart, the flame after her flesh, until she goes to NN'; 'in order that every burning, every heat, every fire in which you are today, you will make them in the heart, the lungs, the liver, the spleen . . . of NN . . . until she goes to . . .'; 'put madness after her heart, fever after her flesh . . .'.

We may take this bipartite construction as an ideal form realised in many extant spells, but it is in fact merely one favoured option among many. Demotic and Graeco-Egyptian spells can be placed on a continuum between the notionally contrastive poles of exclusive use of material on the one hand, and utterance on the other.

---

the relation between scarab (*hprr*) and the various manifestations of the Sun, esp. Khopri, (and Osiris, as here) in the late period and the magical papyri, see Hopfner 1913, 158f.; Sicherl 1937, 60–73.

[53] On *historiolae*, see recently Frankfurter 1995; on slander as a generic device in the magical papyri, see still Eitrem 1924.

[54] I take it that the separation of left from right is intended to signify the creation of a lack or absence, which can only be made good by the fulfilment of the spell. At the same time, the practitioner/client's retention of the left-hand parings (left is usually associated with the female) implies the man's total domination over the woman's will. By ingesting material from the right (the male side), she loses her specific identity as an autonomous (female) person.

These options are however unequally represented in our surviving texts. Whereas a few simple recipes consist solely of *materia magica*,[55] there is a marked tendency in the more elaborate Graeco-Egyptian spells for reference to *materia magica* to become perfunctory or even to be omitted entirely in favour of elaborate incantations and/or 'hymns'.[56] The implication of this unequal distribution is that language was tacitly taken to be the major determinative element in elevated or ritual magical practice.[57] Although this assumption is linked to generic rules, it must have been grounded on two considerations. First, that it is almost entirely through language that sufficient weight of mythical reference can be accumulated to give a spell the force required to bring about changes in the world. *Materia magica* has only the looser force of connotation. Second, that knowledge of divine names, which is crucial to the effectiveness of hk^3, can only be displayed by utterance, or its fixed analogue, writing.

The nature of our texts, composed as they are of materials from various earlier sources and no doubt different temple (and other) locations, means that it is extremely difficult to trace innovations in magical technique.[58] But there are additional features of the spells in the papyri, which cannot be caught by the image of the continuum between substance and incantation, which have suggestive implications. I take first the formal devices.

---

[55] E.g. PDM xiv 1090–96; 1130–40 (frg.); 1182–87; 1190–93; 1206–18; xli 58–62; 128–47 (all amatory); 716–49; xli 43–48–57 ('medical'); *PGM* VII 186–96.

[56] E.g. *PGM* I 42–195; 195–222; III 282–409; IV 94–153; 154–285; 850–929; 930–1114; 1115–66; 1167–1226; 1390–1495; 1496–1595; 1716–1870; 2241–2358; 2622–2707; 2708–84; 2785–890; 3007–86; V 96–172; 370–446; VI 1–47; VII 981–93; 1017–26; VIII 1–63; the three *praxeis* of XIII. Some, but by no means a majority, of these recipes are for divinatory purposes, a genre which evidently required little in the way of *materia magica.*

[57] Although Ritner rightly warns against the modern tendency to identify Egyptian magic with the written spells (1993, 35–38), the implication of the elaborate ritual *praxeis* of the papyri is that the House of Life priests themselves tended to do so in the Roman period. To what extent this development might be related to the influence of theurgy it is impossible to say.

[58] Of *materia magica* it may be true that 'what governs the invention of new recipes is by and large a fairly simple type of analogical reasoning' (Dickie 1999, 184), but incantations are much more difficult to analyse.

The manipulation of text

Formal devices in the magical papyri are virtually always means of representing *onomata*, and gain part of their effect by rejecting the normal rule by which such 'names' are written out from left to right according to the conventional orthographic rules in Greek, a rule which was undoubtedly held to replicate their recitation in a particular sequence of a certain duration. Formal devices regularly found in the magical papyri include palindromes and (much more rarely) anagrams, *charaktêres* (letters in non-standard script), and a variety of devices which are, like those word-games, wholly visual in their effect: most commonly, lists of individual *onomata* arranged vertically (like a shopping-list), called a 'rectangle' (*plinthion*, lit. 'little brick'); 'slope' (*klima*), a vowel-sequence or palindrome in the form of a triangle ; 'heart' or 'bunch of grapes' (*kardia, botrys*), the same type of figure inverted; and 'wing' (*pterygion*), which is, as it were, half a 'hearts' cut off down the centre line—a right-angled triangle standing on its smallest angle (Fig. 1).[59] Very occasionally other forms occur, such as the diagram at the head of col. XIX of *P.Leid.* J 395 of sequences of vowels to be recited in the six different cardinal directions (including heavenward and earthward).[60]

χισιφϑη	ι	ερεχισιφϑη	ερεχισιφϑη
χισιφϑη	σιφ	ρεχισιφϑ	ρεχισιφϑη
χισιφϑη	ισιφϑ	εχισιφ	εχισιφϑη
χισιφϑη	χισιφϑη	χισι	χισιφϑη
χισιφϑη	ρεχισιφϑη	ισ	ισιφϑη
χισιφϑη	ερεχισιφϑη	ι	σιφ...

1. The four main types of magical figure (from l.): 'rectangle', 'slope', 'heart', 'wing'.

---

[59] On formal devices, see briefly Dornseiff 1925, 63–67. Later writers, including Deonna 1944, do not add significantly to his points. Interestingly enough, Hopfner did not see fit to discuss them at all in Hopfner 1921/1974, though he devoted a great deal of space to the *onomata*. The terms for the formal shapes are conveniently listed by Kotansky 1994, 202f. on no. 37. Most recently on *charaktêres*, Maltomini 1998, 73–80 with the bibliography in n. 239; in Arabic magic: Winkler 1930.

[60] *PGM* XIII 836–42 with Daniel 1991, 68f.; cf. Hopfner 1921/1974 §774. Though they are printed by Preisendanz-Henrichs in an interesting 'offset' form, the subsequent vowel sequences at the end of col. XX (lines 905–911) in the same text are in fact written as quite ordinary 'bricks' in three columns: see photo and text in Daniel 1991, 70f.

Virtually nothing is known of the origins of these devices. From the facts that palindromes do not occur in Egyptian magic, and there are only three examples of palindromes in the surviving Demotic magical papyri, all of which are in fact 'Greek', we can conclude that the idea of constructing *onomata* as palindromes was Greek. This is also the likeliest inference from the cumbersome manner in which the instruction is given in one of these Demotic cases: 'You should utter this great name after all these; you should utter it from beginning to end and from end to beginning, four times'.[61] None of the scraps of the earliest surviving receptaries (late first century BC–first century AD) contain any such devices.[62] The earliest example, which combines a palindrome (*Ablanathanalba*) with a 'heart', occurs on an ostrakon from Medinet Madi in the Fayyûm, dated I/II^{p}, possibly in a medical connection.[63] The earliest surviving complex palindrome (Ιαωβαφρ . . .) is written in the form of a 'rectangle' in the instructions for making a *lamella* against pain in the bones and sinews, dated II^{p}.[64] The same palindrome occurs as an evidently optional superscription in one of the Matrona *agôgima* (forcible erotic spells) now in Cologne University Museum, which Daniel and Maltomini have down-dated to II–III^{p}, but which, in my view, their first editor, Dirk Wortmann, more correctly dated somewhat later.[65] A very similar superscription prefaces a judicial subjugation text on lead from Alexandria attributed to the same date by Daniel and Maltomini but to III^{p} by Audollent: here the palindrome is ερηκισιθφη . . .[66] No fewer than four, called 'four fair gods of good repute', are invoked in an unusual spell of the same period to protect a mummy.[67] Since the same practitioners both provided both medical and malign magical services, we cannot conclude that the practice of creating formal devices spread from one to the other.[68] Most of the devices appear in the palaeographically earliest surviving complete receptary, *P.Brit.Mus.* CXXI (late III^{p}), but they are never referred to by means of the concrete terms, 'heart', 'wing' etc. that become available in later papyri. Instead the practitioner provides long-winded instructions to explain what is intended, e.g. 'putting one (*onoma*) on top of the other like a brick' or 'subtracting as you go down'.[69] A stimulus from Hellenistic 'concrete poetry', the so-called *technopaignia* of Sim(m)ias of Rhodes and others, has often been suspected, but seems on the whole unlikely.[70]

---

[61] PDM xiv 873f. (Johnson's tr. altered slightly). This palindrome is found elsewhere, in *PGM* IV 1941f. and on a gem in the British Museum (56398), Bonner 1952, 203f. The other cases are *Ablanathanalba* in PDM xiv 16, and the *Aberamenthou*-palindrome in a Greek sequence (*PGM* XIVc 24 = PDM xiv 689). In their surviving form, all the Demotic magical papyri are of course fourth-century AD.

[62] On the notable diversity of these earliest texts, and the possibility that at least Daniel and Maltomini 1990–92 no. 72 = Brashear 1979, was deliberately constructed in the light of both Greek and Egyptian expectations, see now Faraone 2000.

[63] Daniel and Maltomini 1990–92 no. 67, who rightly reject Vogliano's idea that the *Schwindelschema* was a 'wing' (Vogliano 1937, 50). The text on the reverse seems to be a list of ingredients for some medical purpose.

[64] Daniel and Maltomini 1990–92 no. 74 ll. 11–16. The palindrome is broken up into sections, 2 lines of 9 letters, 2 lines of 13, 1 of 10, one of 5. The editors do not note that it is, so far, the earliest known example of a complex palindrome, or a 'rectangle' for that matter. The term 'rectangle' (πλίνθιον) appears in *PGM* IV 1304f. with Preisendanz' comment.

[65] Daniel and Maltomini 1990–92 no. 49 l. 1 with Wortmann 1968, 57f.

[66] Audollent 1904 no. 38 = Daniel and Maltomini 1990–92 no. 54. The later date is supported by David Jordan.

It seems likely that the origin of the practice of constructing (and learning) palindromic *onomata* lay in one of the techniques for creating strings of *onomata* which I have already referred to, the ritual-magical practice of 'babbling', that is, the extempore utterance of words with no known referent. Even in the fixed form of these preserved in the receptaries, we can occasionally find unintended palindromes, which have no significance as such, for example the sequence αθαλλαθα within the 'phrase' αλθακα ειαθαλλαθα σαλαιοθ.[71] Given that, in the stress of extemporary composition, practitioners must unconsciously have had recourse to one of the primary techniques of literacy, the lists of syllables that as young men they had had to learn by heart, and the obvious value of reversing such sequences in creating continuous utterance, unintended palindromes must have been frequent. Once this feature had been noted, the deliberate creation of palindromes was an obvious step. But they were never common: there are less than thirty relatively complex examples in the corpus, and the great majority of examples are of one of the five

---

[67] *PGM* LIX 5–10, from the Fayyûm (II–III^{p}).

[68] It is commonly, though mistakenly, thought that the 'heart' is intended to denote the disappearance of the fever, disease etc. At best, this is a secondary evocation, for example in the fever charms Daniel and Maltomini 1990–92 nos. 3 ll. 7–13; 9 l. 1–9; 11 ll. 1–8, or the highly original schema against sore throat: ibid. no. 1 with their excellent commentary (all dated by them III^{p} or III–IV^{p}).

[69] *PGM* VII 656 and 220, in each case S. Eitrem brilliantly provided the required emendation (resp. 1923, 16; 15).

[70] Cf. Lenz 1954; Wojaczek 1969; Ernst 1991.

[71] *PGM* XXXVI 107.

'great' palindromes, which occur well over one hundred times and are often abbreviated to 'the so-and-so *logos*'.[72]

Although at least the 'grand' palindromes, and probably the others, were learned by heart, they cannot have been composed as palindromes in the head: the reverse half of any palindrome, and certainly any as complex as these examples containing up to 59 letters, must have been created by being written out and inspected. Since the palindrome cannot be verified aurally, they were in the first place visual devices and only secondarily acoustic ones. The palindrome is one clear sign of a growing dominance of the written over the spoken incantation. The geometric formal devices are another sign: they can only be appreciated on the page. In this case too, we may suspect that their ultimate origin lies in the ritual utterance of vowel sounds, sequences of which are so common among the *onomata* (and which once again could only be written down—as opposed to learned by imitation—in Greek). 'Slopes' are only found in relation to dynamic vowel sequences (each vowel from α repeated once more than its predecessor).[73] 'Rectangles' may have been inspired by the figure of anaphora, which often occurs in these texts,[74] and which is a device of 'natural' rhetoric as well as of art; but its great advantage when used as a written device was that it laid out the several *onomata* to view instead of setting them in a conventional sequence across the page.

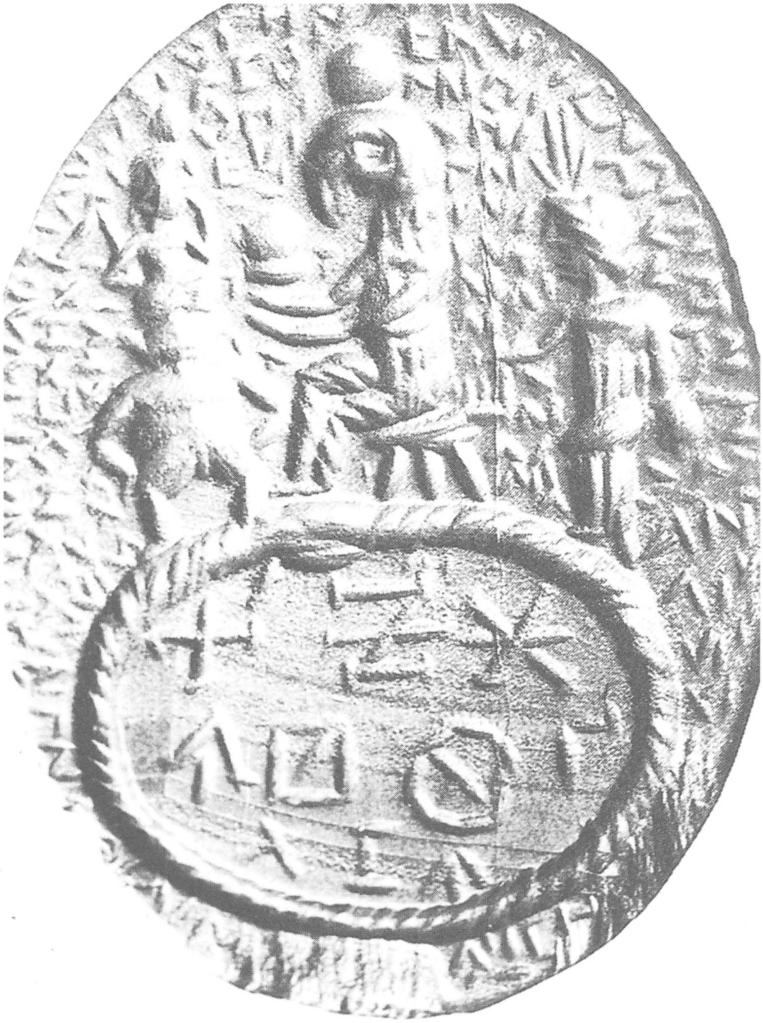
Invented scripts, in this case primarily *charaktêres* (Fig. 2), are among the commonest devices of literate and quasi-literate magicians everywhere. Sometimes their use simply registers the gap between the cultural prestige of ordinary local writing and its social dissemination: in these cases cabbalistic signs merely mark the exclusion of magical practitioners from competent literacy. But that is not the case with the Graeco-Egyptian papyri, whose practitioners were certainly in general literate and in some cases learned members of a traditional religious caste. These signs seem also to have emerged during the late second-early third century AD (they are at any rate

---

[72] E.g. *PGM* IV 181; 1999f.; 3071f.

[73] E.g. Daniel and Maltomini 1990–92 no. 7 (III^{p}), protective amulet; *PGM* V 79–90 (to catch a thief), where the vowels are called 'fearsome'.

[74] Good examples in the 'Great Angelic hierarchy' amulets: *PGM* XXXV; Kotansky 1994 no. 52 (the Beirut amulet); the recently-published *lamella Bernensis* (Gelzer et al. 1999). Kotansky aptly cites the sequence of angels invoked in *P.Paris.* 2316 ap. Reitzenstein 1904, 297f.



2. Uterus-amulet (II–III^{p}) with an *ouroboros* enclosing 10 *charaktêres*.
From: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992, no. 23, pl. 16.

absent from the earliest papyri), and constitute an 'open' series.[75] One can distinguish between a small number—around a dozen—which occur in virtually the same form very widely, in amulets, receptaries and 'activated' texts, and which were certainly learned as part of the practitioners' training, and a wider group of around thirty basic shapes. The great majority of individual signs—and there are well over one thousand—occur only once or twice, where the repetition is generally in the same context. In other words, the great majority are signs invented *ad hoc*, on the basis of a knowledge of Greek, hieratic and demotic. The practitioners learned how to apply a small number of techniques of 'Verfremdung' to the basic thirty shapes, but were also free to make up their own signs. Once again, the significance of *charaktêres* is that, irrespective of whether in each case they constitute a code and could therefore have been read back by the practitioner who composed them, they can only be appreciated visually. They imply a magical text that is interesting and powerful in itself, as a document and not merely as a record of a rite.

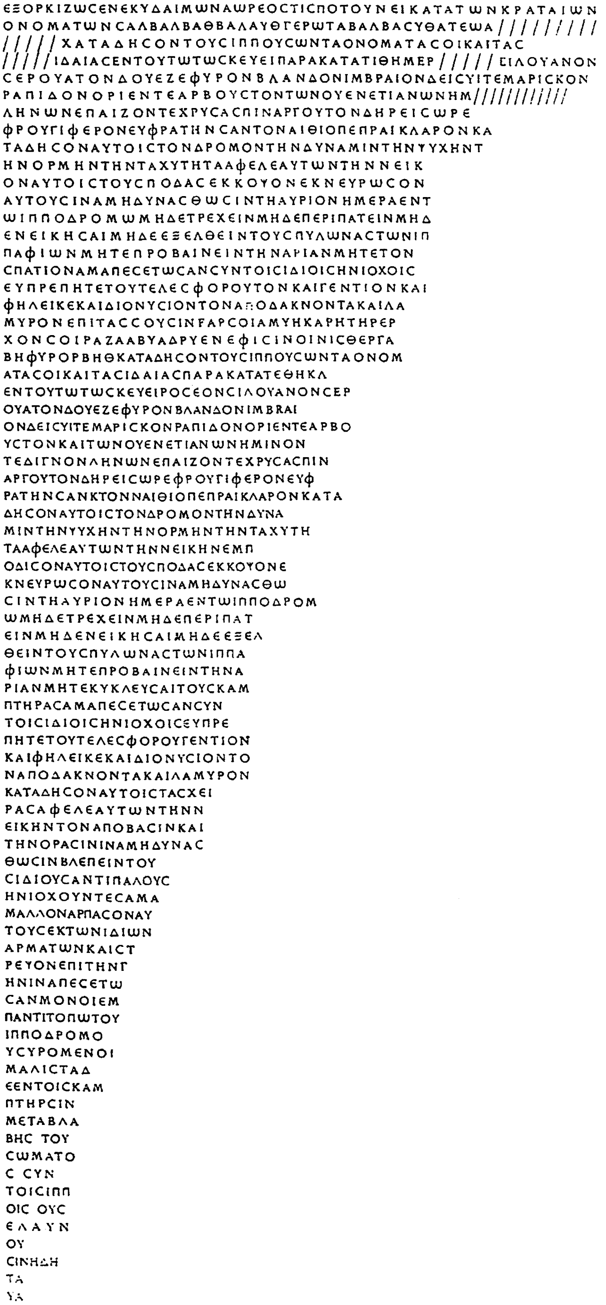
This notion of a text powerful in its own right can be illustrated by means of a number of interestingly original productions, of which I here select four. In two examples on lead sheet from North Africa, both *defixiones* against charioteers, the entire text has been composed so as to create an allusion to formal operations.[76] The first (Fig. 3) is one of a series created by the same practitioner found in a grave at Bir ez Zitoun at Carthage, and, like them, is a long curse written in Greek so as to recall a 'wing', but on a massively larger scale than any surviving from Egypt itself.[77] The 'wing' has been creatively

---

[75] As far as I can tell, the earliest *charaktêres* yet found occur at the end of Daniel and Maltomini 1990–92 no. 38, which they date to II^{p}, but this may be yet another case in which their dating is too low—the original editor dated it III–IV^{p}. *Charaktêres* appear in none of Kotansky's amulets on metal dated by him prior to III^{p}, with two exceptions, nos. 46 (Syria) and 62 (Tunisia), both dated II–III^{p}. The dating of amulets on stone is not precise enough to allow conclusions on this point.

[76] I do not pursue here the question of the relation between the practitioners in the North African cities, and elsewhere in the Mediterranean (e.g. Athens, Corinth, Rhodes, Amathous in Cyprus) and the ritual experts of Egyptian temples. Jordan 1994, 123f. has indeed urged that the formularies used outside Egypt probably in fact originated there. For my purposes, it is enough to say that the practice of ritual magic outside Egypt shares many features with the magical papyri.

[77] *CIL* VIII 12508 = Audollent 1904 no. 237, which belongs to the series nos. 234–42. The date is probably III^{p}. Kotansky 1994, 202 no. 37 (II–III^{p}) is an interesting amulet from Ephesus, in which a 'wing' has been created on the basis of an initial string of 17 vowels, to create a figure whose main interest may have been that it includes 153 vowels.



ЄΞΟΡΚΙΖωϹЄΝЄΚΥΔΑΙΜωΝΑωΡЄΟϹΤΙϹΠΟΤΟΥΝЄΙΚΑΤΑΤωΝΚΡΑΤΑΙωΝ
ΟΝΟΜΑΤωΝϹΑΛΒΑΛΒΑΘΒΑΛΑΥΘΓЄΡωΤΑΒΑΛΒΑϹΥΘΑΤЄωΑ//////////
//////ΧΑΤΑΔΗϹΟΝΤΟΥϹΙΠΠΟΥϹωΝΤΑΟΝΟΜΑΤΑϹΟΙΚΑΙΤΑϹ
//////ΙΔΑΙΑϹЄΝΤΟΥΤωΤωϹΚЄΥЄΙΠΑΡΑΚΑΤΑΤΙΘΗΜЄΡ/////ϹΙΛΟΥΑΝΟΝ
ϹЄΡΟΥΑΤΟΝΔΟΥЄΖЄΦΥΡΟΝΒΛΑΝΔΟΝΙΜΒΡΑΙΟΝΔЄΙϹΥΙΤЄΜΑΡΙϹΚΟΝ
ΡΑΠΙΔΟΝΟΡΙЄΝΤЄΑΡΒΟΥϹΤΟΝΤωΝΟΥЄΝЄΤΙΑΝωΝΗΜ///////////
ΛΗΝωΝЄΠΑΙΖΟΝΤЄΧΡΥϹΑϹΠΙΝΑΡΓΟΥΤΟΝΔΗΡЄΙϹωΡЄ
ΦΡΟΥΓΙΦЄΡΟΝЄΥΦΡΑΤΗΝϹΑΝΤΟΝΑΙΘΙΟΠЄΠΡΑΙΚΛΑΡΟΝΚΑ
ΤΑΔΗϹΟΝΑΥΤΟΙϹΤΟΝΔΡΟΜΟΝΤΗΝΔΥΝΑΜΙΝΤΗΝΥΥΧΗΝΤ
ΗΝΟΡΜΗΝΤΗΝΤΑΧΥΤΗΤΑΑΦЄΛЄΑΥΤωΝΤΗΝΝЄΙΚ
ΟΝΑΥΤΟΙϹΤΟΥϹΠΟΔΑϹЄΚΚΟΥΟΝЄΚΝЄΥΡωϹΟΝ
ΑΥΤΟΥϹΙΝΑΜΗΔΥΝΑϹΘωϹΙΝΤΗΑΥΡΙΟΝΗΜЄΡΑЄΝΤ
ωΙΠΠΟΔΡΟΜωΜΗΔЄΤΡЄΧЄΙΝΜΗΔЄΠЄΡΙΠΑΤЄΙΝΜΗΔ
ЄΝЄΙΚΗϹΑΙΜΗΔЄЄΞЄΛΘЄΙΝΤΟΥϹΠΥΛωΝΑϹΤωΝΙΠ
ΠΑΦΙωΝΜΗΤЄΠΡΟΒΑΙΝЄΙΝΤΗΝΑΡΙΑΝΜΗΤЄΤΟΝ
ϹΠΑΤΙΟΝΑΜΑΠЄϹЄΤωϹΑΝϹΥΝΤΟΙϹΙΔΙΟΙϹΗΝΙΟΧΟΙϹ
ЄΥΠΡЄΠΗΤЄΤΟΥΤЄΛЄϹΦΟΡΟΥΤΟΝΚΑΙΓЄΝΤΙΟΝΚΑΙ
ΦΗΛЄΙΚЄΚΑΙΔΙΟΝΥϹΙΟΝΤΟΝΑΠΟΔΑΚΝΟΝΤΑΚΑΙΛΑ
ΜΥΡΟΝЄΠΙΤΑϹϹΟΥϹΙΝFΑΡϹΟΙΑΜΥΗΚΑΡΗΤΗΡЄΡ
ΧΟΝϹΟΙΡΑΖΑΑΒΥΑΔΡΥЄΝЄΦΙϹΙΝΟΙΝΙϹΘЄΡΓΑ
ΒΗΦΥΡΟΡΒΗΘΚΑΤΑΔΗϹΟΝΤΟΥϹΙΠΠΟΥϹωΝΤΑΟΝΟΜ
ΑΤΑϹΟΙΚΑΙΤΑϹΙΔΑΙΑϹΠΑΡΑΚΑΤΑΤЄΘΗΚΛ
ЄΝΤΟΥΤωΤωϹΚЄΥЄΙΡΟϹЄΟΝϹΙΛΟΥΑΝΟΝϹЄΡ
ΟΥΑΤΟΝΔΟΥЄΖЄΦΥΡΟΝΒΛΑΝΔΟΝΙΜΒRΑΙ
ΟΝΔЄΙϹΥΙΤЄΜΑΡΙϹΚΟΝΡΑΠΙΔΟΝΟΡΙЄΝΤЄΑΡΒΟ
ΥϹΤΟΝΚΑΙΤωΝΟΥЄΝЄΤΙΑΝωΝΗΜΙΝΟΝ
ΤЄΔΙΓΝΟΝΛΗΝωΝЄΠΑΙΖΟΝΤЄΧΡΥϹΑϹΠΙΝ
ΑΡΓΟΥΤΟΝΔΗΡЄΙϹωΡЄΦΡΟΥΓΙΦЄΡΟΝЄΥΦ
ΡΑΤΗΝϹΑΝΚΤΟΝΝΑΙΘΙΟΠЄΠΡΑΙΚΛΑΡΟΝΚΑΤΑ
ΔΗϹΟΝΑΥΤΟΙϹΤΟΝΔΡΟΜΟΝΤΗΝΔΥΝΑ
ΜΙΝΤΗΝΥΥΧΗΝΤΗΝΟΡΜΗΝΤΗΝΤΑΧΥΤΗ
ΤΑΑΦЄΛЄΑΥΤωΝΤΗΝΝЄΙΚΗΝЄΜΠ
ΟΔΙϹΟΝΑΥΤΟΙϹΤΟΥϹΠΟΔΑϹЄΚΚΟΥΟΝЄ
ΚΝЄΥΡωϹΟΝΑΥΤΟΥϹΙΝΑΜΗΔΥΝΑϹΘω
ϹΙΝΤΗΑΥΡΙΟΝΗΜЄΡΑЄΝΤωΙΠΠΟΔΡΟΜ
ωΜΗΔЄΤΡЄΧЄΙΝΜΗΔЄΠЄΡΙΠΑΤ
ЄΙΝΜΗΔЄΝЄΙΚΗϹΑΙΜΗΔЄЄΞЄΛ
ΘЄΙΝΤΟΥϹΠΥΛωΝΑϹΤωΝΙΠΠΑ
ΦΙωΝΜΗΤЄΠΡΟΒΑΙΝЄΙΝΤΗΝΑ
ΡΙΑΝΜΗΤЄΚΥΚΛЄΥϹΑΙΤΟΥϹΚΑΜ
ΠΤΗΡΑϹΑΜΑΠЄϹЄΤωϹΑΝϹΥΝ
ΤΟΙϹΙΔΙΟΙϹΗΝΙΟΧΟΙϹЄΥΠΡЄ
ΠΗΤЄΤΟΥΤЄΛЄϹΦΟΡΟΥΓЄΝΤΙΟΝ
ΚΑΙΦΗΛЄΙΚЄΚΑΙΔΙΟΝΥϹΙΟΝΤΟ
ΝΑΠΟΔΑΚΝΟΝΤΑΚΑΙΛΑΜΥΡΟΝ
ΚΑΤΑΔΗϹΟΝΑΥΤΟΙϹΤΑϹΧЄΙ
ΡΑϹΑΦЄΛЄΑΥΤωΝΤΗΝΝ
ЄΙΚΗΝΤΟΝΑΠΟΒΑϹΙΝΚΑΙ
ΤΗΝΟΡΑϹΙΝΙΝΑΜΗΔΥΝΑϹ
ΘωϹΙΝΒΛЄΠЄΙΝΤΟΥ
ϹΙΔΙΟΥϹΑΝΤΙΠΑΛΟΥϹ
ΗΝΙΟΧΟΥΝΤЄϹΑΜΑ
ΜΑΛΛΟΝΑΡΠΑϹΟΝΑΥ
ΤΟΥϹЄΚΤωΝΙΔΙωΝ
ΑΡΜΑΤωΝΚΑΙϹΤ
ΡЄΥΟΝЄΠΙΤΗΝΓ
ΗΝΙΝΑΠЄϹЄΤω
ϹΑΝΜΟΝΟΙЄΜ
ΠΑΝΤΙΤΟΠωΤΟΥ
ΙΠΠΟΔΡΟΜΟ
ΥϹΥΡΟΜЄΝΟΙ
ΜΑΛΙϹΤΑΔ
ЄЄΝΤΟΙϹΚΑΜ
ΠΤΗΡϹΙΝ
ΜЄΤΑΒΛΑ
ΒΗϹ ΤΟΥ
ϹωΜΑΤΟ
Ϲ ϹΥΝ
ΤΟΙϹΙΠΠ
ΟΙϹ ΟΥϹ
ЄΛΑΥΝ
ΟΥ
ϹΙΝΗΔΗ
ΤΑ
ΥΑ

3. Curse against charioteers from Carthage (III^p) composed in the form of a 'wing': Audollent 1904 no. 237.

misunderstood: instead of being constructed by omitting one letter from the same *onoma* or palindrome in each succeeding line, a normal curse-text has been written out to create a wedge-shape, presumably so as to transfer the power associated with the 'wing' to the text as a whole. The second *defixio* (Fig. 4) is also one of series, this time from Hadrumetum (Sousse in E. Tunisia), again evidently created by the same practitioner.[78] In this case *charaktêres* have been arranged so as to form 'knots' so as visually to bind or 'catch' the horses and their charioteers, thus secondarily reproducing the intention of the explicit maledictions. The curse is broken into distinct blocks of text: first the principals, Privatianus Superstianus and his six co-charioteers, and then 43 horses, each named and pursued by the word *cadant*. In the centre of the lead tablet, the *charaktêres* isolate two lines of text, which return to some of the principals who must have been considered particularly dangerous by the client. The whole is surrounded, as in a knot, by another version of the main curse: *Obligate et gravate equos veneti et russei, ne currere possint nec frenis audire possint nec se mo(v)ere possint, set cadant, frangant, dis[f]rangantur* . . . (ll. 29–31). Although *charaktêres* were indeed considered powerful, and are sometimes arranged on either side of a central motif, this is again an original transposition of the dominant conception of their use so as visually to reinforce the message.[79]

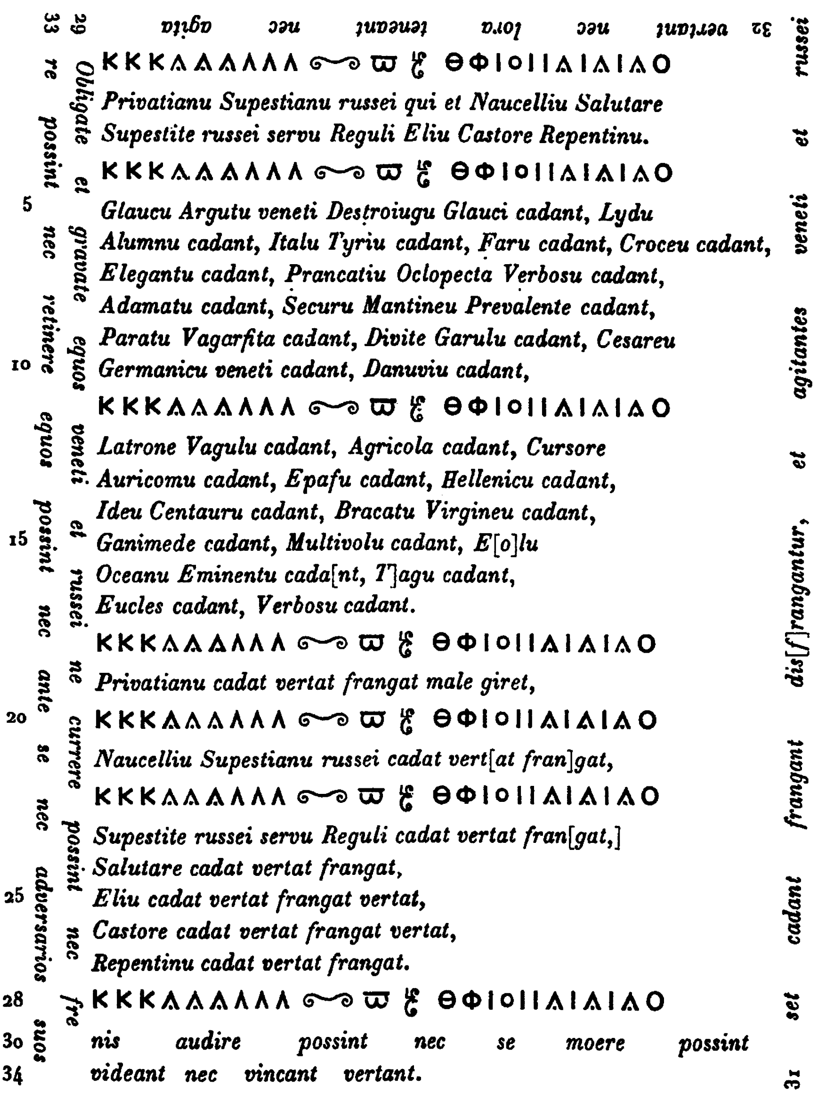
The other two texts, whose compositions consist wholly of formal designs, are also written on lead sheets, but are somewhat later. The first, which 'prefaces' a version of the well-known *philtrokatadesmos* in *PGM* IV 296–466, combines three of the four commonest formal devices.[80] A massive 'heart' of 30 lines based on the palindrome

---

[78] Audollent 1904 no. 275, dated cautiously by him to II^{p}; the others in the series are nos. 276–84, and *AE* 1907: 68f. Hadrumetum, like Carthage, was a well-known centre of chariot-racing: a well-known mosaic found in 1960 shows over 100 named horses: Foucher 1964, 163 (b 550).

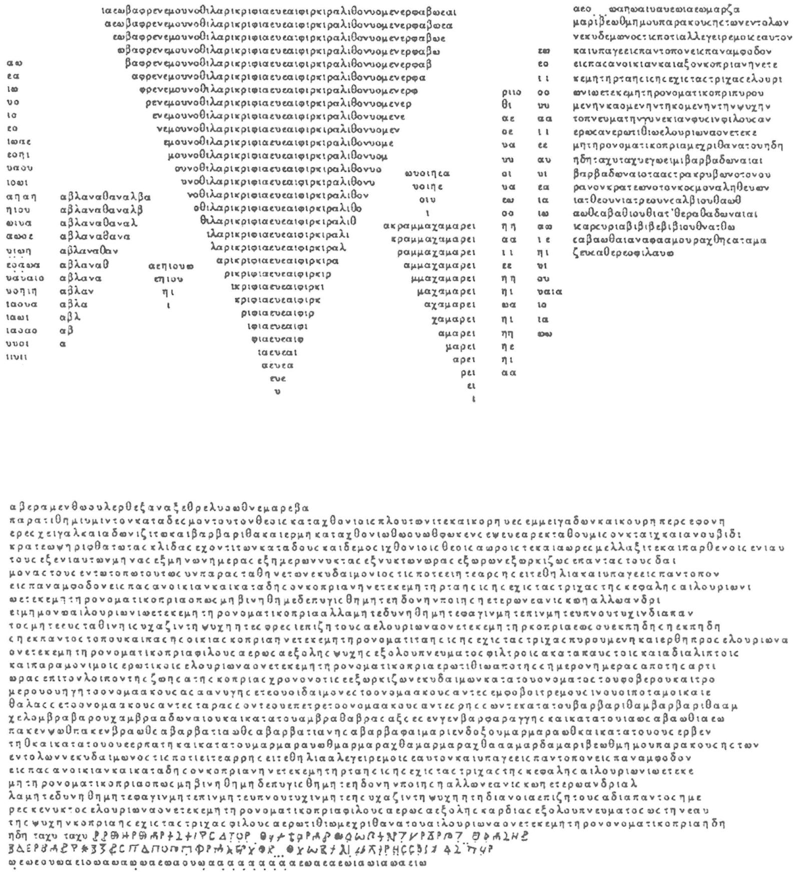
[79] Examples of *charaktêres* arranged alongside a central motif include *PGM* IV 409–34 (omitted by Preisendanz), VII 930–39 (immediately above the coffin of Osiris, Fig. 5 below); XXXVI 50–66; XLIX; Kotansky 1994, 370 no. 62 (fig. 61); Audollent 1904 no. 245; arranged horizontally with text between: Kotansky 1994, 83 no. 18 (fig. 20); ibid. 334 no. 58 (fig. 57); Jordan 1996, 116f. no. 2 (malign magic). There are several similar texts at Carthage, albeit with *onomata* not *charaktêres*, e.g. Audollent 1904 nos. 233, 244, 252.

[80] Martinez 1991 = Daniel and Maltomini 1990–92 no. 48. They date it to II–III^{p} on unspecified palaeographic grounds; in my view Martinez' date, III/IV^{p}, is more likely to be correct. Daniel and Maltomini do not observe that their proposed date would make this complex figure by far the earliest example known—all the others are (late) III^{p}, mainly IV^{p}.



ΚΚΚΑΑΑΑΑΑ ϭ⁓ϭ ϖ ξ ΘΦΙΟΙΙΑΙΑΙΑΟ
Privatianu Supestianu russei qui et Naucelliu Salutare
Supestite russei servu Reguli Eliu Castore Repentinu.
ΚΚΚΑΑΑΑΑΑ ϭ⁓ϭ ϖ ξ ΘΦΙΟΙΙΑΙΑΙΑΟ
Glaucu Argutu veneti Destroiugu Glauci cadant, Lydu
Alumnu cadant, Italu Tyriu cadant, Faru cadant, Croceu cadant,
Elegantu cadant, Prancatiu Oclopecta Verbosu cadant,
Adamatu cadant, Securu Mantineu Prevalente cadant,
Paratu Vagarfita cadant, Divite Garulu cadant, Cesareu
Germanicu veneti cadant, Danuviu cadant,
ΚΚΚΑΑΑΑΑΑ ϭ⁓ϭ ϖ ξ ΘΦΙΟΙΙΑΙΑΙΑΟ
Latrone Vagulu cadant, Agricola cadant, Cursore
Auricomu cadant, Epafu cadant, Hellenicu cadant,
Ideu Centauru cadant, Bracatu Virgineu cadant,
Ganimede cadant, Multivolu cadant, E[o]lu
Oceanu Eminentu cada[nt, T]agu cadant,
Eucles cadant, Verbosu cadant.
ΚΚΚΑΑΑΑΑΑ ϭ⁓ϭ ϖ ξ ΘΦΙΟΙΙΑΙΑΙΑΟ
Privatianu cadat vertat frangat male giret,
ΚΚΚΑΑΑΑΑΑ ϭ⁓ϭ ϖ ξ ΘΦΙΟΙΙΑΙΑΙΑΟ
Naucelliu Supestianu russei cadat vert[at fran]gat,
ΚΚΚΑΑΑΑΑΑ ϭ⁓ϭ ϖ ξ ΘΦΙΟΙΙΑΙΑΙΑΟ
Supestite russei servu Reguli cadat vertat fran[gat,]
Salutare cadat vertat frangat,
Eliu cadat vertat frangat vertat,
Castore cadat vertat frangat vertat,
Repentinu cadat vertat frangat.
28 ΚΚΚΑΑΑΑΑΑ ϭ⁓ϭ ϖ ξ ΘΦΙΟΙΙΑΙΑΙΑΟ
29 *Obligate et gravate equos veneti et russei ne currere possint nec fre-*
30 *nis audire possint nec se moere possint*
31 *set cadant frangant dis[f]rangantur, et agitantes et veneti et russei*
32 *vertant nec lora teneant nec agita-*
33 *re possint nec retinere equos possint nec ante se nec adversarios suos*
34 *videant nec vincant vertant.*

4. Curse against charioteers of the Reds and Greens from Hadrumetum (III^{p}): Audollent 1904 no. 275.



5. Complex formal design from the forcible love spell (*agogimon*) in *PMich.* 6925 (?III–IV^{P}): Daniel and Maltomini 1990–92 no. 48.

ευλαμω
υλαμωε
λαμωευ
αμωευλ
μωευλα
ωευλαμ

ναί, κύριε, cιcιcρω cιcι φερμου Χνουωρ Αβραcαξ Φυ̣ουνοβοηλ
οχλοβαζαρω
διὰ τὸ ἅγιον   ερηκιcιθφηαραραχαραραηφθιcικηρε
ὄνομα Ιωβεζεβυθ   ρηκιcιθφηαραραχαραραηφθιcικηρ
βύθιε Ζεῦ   ηκιcιθφηαραραχαραραηφθιcικη
ιωβαριαμβω   κιcιθφηαραραχαραραηφθιcικ   οπλομυρτιλοπλη[ξ]
μερμεριου Αβραcαξ   ιcιθφηαραραχαραραηφθιcι   εξανακερω̣ν̣[ιθα]
ευλαμω   cικηρεαραραχαραραηφθιc   λαμψαμερω
ευλαμ   ωμαλυε   ικηρεαραραχαραηφθι   λαμψαμαζων̣
ευλα   μαλυ   ευλαμω   κηρεαραραχαραραηφθ   βαcυμ Ιαω̣ [?
[ευ]λ   αλ   υλαμω   φηαραραχαραραηφ   οπλομυρτιλοπληξ
[ε]υ   α   λαμω   ηαραραχαραραη   αναχαζα
ε   αμω   αραραχαραρα   εξανακερωνιθα
μω   ραραχαραρα   αναξαρναξα
ω   αραχαραρρ   κεραcφακερωναc
κατάcχεται τὸν θυμόν, τὴν   αχαρα   φαμεταθαcμαξαρανα
ὀργὴν Παωμίου, ὃν ἔτεκεν   ρχαρ   βαcυμ Ιαω ιακινθου
ἡ Τιcᾶτε, ἤδη ἤδη,   α   κατάcχεται τὴν ὀργήν, τὸν
ταχὺ ταχύ.   θυμὸν Παώμιτοc, ὃν ἔτεκεν
ἡ Τιcᾶτε, ἤδη ἤδη, ταχὺ ταχύ.

6. Complex formal design from an Egyptian 'restrainer' (thumokatochon), IV^{p}): Daniel and Maltomini 1990–92 no. 57.

ιαεωβαφρε . . . is flanked by two symmetrical 'wings' composed of the most popular of all *logoi*, *Ablanathanalba achrammachamarei*.[81] Near each of these is a much smaller 'heart' composed of the seven vowels, running from l. to r. on the left, and inversely on the right. This core composition is flanked on either side by extremely elongated 'rectangles'; that on the l. is mainly composed of 4–5 vowel permutations, the two on the r. of vowel pairs, many of them 'twins' (the same vowel repeated).[82] The incantation itself, which commences with the αβεραμενθω-palindrome, occupies the block of text below this 'preface', but carries on into the smaller block on the upper r. of the lead tablet. The core of the second design, which forms the centre-piece, not the 'preface', to a *thumokatochon*, a spell to prevent a man named Paômis from successfully prosecuting the client, is also a large 'heart', composed of the ερηκισιθφη-palindrome.[83] It is surmounted by a ευλαμω-'rectangle'; the same 'name' recurs, in different variants, in the small 'heart' and 'wings' on the l. The block of text on the r., which accompanies the receding slope of the main 'heart', is composed entirely of *onomata*. The design incorporates résumés of the request, which has already been expressed at the beginning, and is repeated twice at the end of the text, r. and l. at the base.

Although such complex designs cannot compare with the enormously elaborate drawings of Arabic and Hindu magic, they are clearly comparable efforts. It may well be that they are ways of re-inventing in a Greek medium the irrecoverable 'total textuality' of hieroglyphic rites, with their fusion of writing, drawing and showing. Their main interest in the present context, it seems to me, is that they refuse the ordinary rule that what can be written can be read (aloud). There are no possible rules for the correct phonic reproduction of such designs: they are a means precisely of 'imbricating' *onomata* in the manner referred to by Iamblichus, of so combining different utterances with geometrical shapes that a kind of choral polyphony is generated, each shape insisting as it were on its own melody but also contributing to the overall 'sound'.[84]

---

[81] It is worth noting that the version of the spell in the great Paris codex also contains a large 'heart', but it is an altogether simpler affair, flanked by vocalic 'rectangles' and *charaktêres* (*PGM* IV 409–34). None of the other surviving versions contains such figures.

[82] The 'rectangles' on the r. also contain two consonants, if they have been correctly read.

[83] Collart 1930 = Daniel and Maltomini 1990–92 no. 57. The illustration is reproduced from Collart's publication.

Except in the case of protective amulets in semi-precious stone, which were carried on the person as rings or round the arm, neck or thigh, the impulse to develop these formal devices owed nothing to popular conceptions of the magician. For they were not visible: they were employed in the composition of written documents which were intended only to be seen or 'read' by their divine recipients—all of these instances I have cited were buried. In my view, they are again devices purely internal to the magician's quest to increase and refine his magical power within the context of his preconceptions and self-image. Their deployment is an expression of the desire to fill out, to dominate, the space that alone belonged utterly to the ritual practitioner, the empty sheet of papyrus or metal on which he wrote. They are answers to a constantly recurrent question: how can I most effectively influence my addressee?

Images

The second type of innovation I wish to discuss here relates to images. Many of the prescriptions in the Graeco-Egyptian receptaries call for diagrams, drawings, engravings or the manufacture of figurines.[85] The images are almost invariably those of divinities or powers invoked in the spell or rite. To take an example of each type: a cropped spell probably for a prophetic dream in the longest of the magical papyri in the British Museum indicates the lay-out of an incantation to be written on the palm of the hand in a spiral extending outwards from a sacred ibis (*hby* ~ *Dhwty*, Thoth, as sender of dreams) at the centre.[86] The '*agôgê* of Pitys' in the Great

---

[84] Perhaps the finest of all these designs is that in *PGM* XIXa 16–48.

[85] The fullest discussion is still Hopfner 1921/1974 §§802–18.

[86] *PGM* VII 300 with plate I fig. 2 = 299 Kenyon (but omitted by him on typographic grounds from his text, p. 94 fn., and shown only in the volume of plates). For the ibis, Sicherl 1937, 167f.; ibises facing in the same direction as here occur on magical amulets, of uncertain purpose, cf. Delatte and Derchain 1964, 150f. nos. 195f.; Philipp 1986, 85f. nos. 119–21 with refs. to other examples. The same receptary contains two other diagrams to show how amulets are to be designed: VII 215–17 (= plate I fig. 1); 930–39 and 940–51 (= pl. I fig. 3), whose appearance in the text is more effectively presented by Kenyon 1893, 91 and 114. Other examples of diagrams are *PGM* X 29–35, again an amulet; and XIII 835–41 and 905–11.

Paris codex requires no less than three drawings of divinities or powers on different materials, ass-hide, a flax-leaf, papyrus, to function as 'spirit carriers'.[87] The 'Sword of Dardanos' in the same codex requires the figures of Aphrodite, Psyche and Eros to be engraved on a 'magnetic' stone, i.e. a magnetite or a haematite, with an inherent or natural power to attract.[88] The modelling of a hippopotamus in red wax, into which other items can be inserted, is required by an *oneiropompon*, a spell to send a specific type of dream to a named individual.[89] These images, whether in two or three dimensions, in some sense laid the divinity or power represented under necessity, and evoke the tradition of Egyptian 'mouth-opening' rituals, by means of which the temple images of the gods were daily brought to life for their tendance. The images concretise the divinity or power (or a metamorph) whose intervention is required by the spell or rite.[90]

Their normal use can be illustrated by means of two examples. The first is a clumsy fusion between two types of spell, for a revelatory dream and for a direct vision of a god.[91] It requires the preparation of a particular perfumed ink, with which the practitioner is to draw a figure on his left hand. This figure (Fig. 7) is to be of a

---

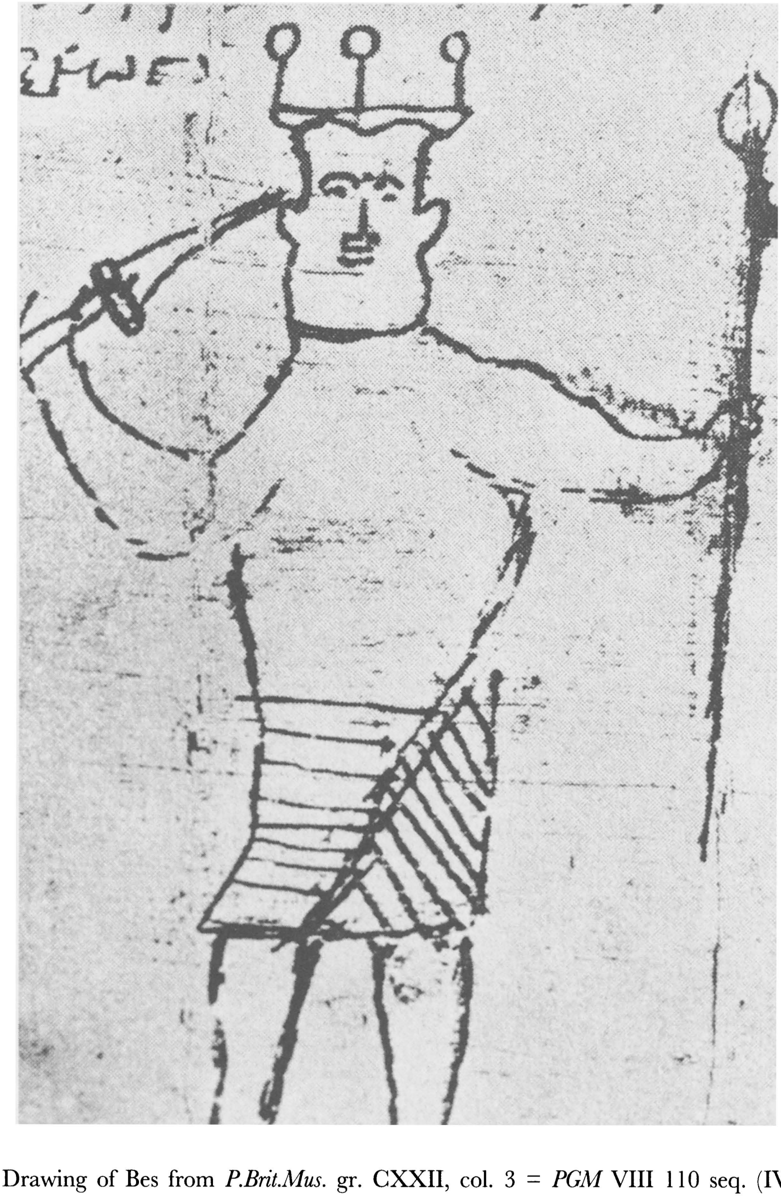
[87] *PGM* IV 2006–2125 at 2111–25. The images are not provided in the receptary, but were more or less standard in the Graeco-Egyptian iconographic repertoire, cf. Hopfner 1924/1983–90 §368f. Other recipes requiring drawings of divinities include *PGM* VII 249 (Bes, picture now missing); XII 121–28 (Pantheos); 145f. (Thoth); see further Hopfner 1921/1974 §818.

[88] *PGM* IV 1722–33. Recipes requiring engravings are common e.g. I 143–47 (Heliôros within an ouroboros on a stone dropped by a passing hawk); IV 2631–33 (Hekate on a magnetic stone); V 238–43 (scarab and an Isis on an emerald); XII 201–07 (Selene within an ouroboros on a blue jasper); see further Hopfner 1921/1974 §817; Bonner 1952, 14f.; Smith 1979; Sfameni forthcoming.

[89] XIII 308–13. The red hippopotamus may allude to Seth (cf. Griffiths 1970, 490 on Plutarch, *De Iside* 50, 371c8), or to Ipet/Taweret, who was associated in the late period with the protection of sleep. Further examples of the manufacture of figurines are *PGM* IV 1842–52 (Eros of mulberry wood); 1877–93 (wax dog); 2359–67 (wax Hermes); 2378–88 ('little beggar' in wax); VII 866–73 (Egyptian 'Selene' of clay); XII 17–20 (wax Eros and Psyche); for others see Hopfner 1921/1974 §816. Ciraolo 1995, 286f. rightly notes that one might also include other objects here, e.g. a drowned falcon, prepared skulls, even a metal lamella, all of which are prescribed as the vehicle for the production of a divine *paredros*, or agent. Such divine statuettes are quite different from the Egyptian execration images discussed by Ritner 1994, 112–80.

[90] Hopfner 1921/1974 §805; Koenig 1994, 100–30 ('Pour l'Égyptien, la statue est réellement l'être ou la chose qu'elle représente').

[91] *PGM* VIII 64–110. Another version exists in VII 222–49, cf. Hopfner 1924/1983–90, 288 §185.



7. Drawing of Bes from *P.Brit.Mus.* gr. CXXII, col. 3 = *PGM* VIII 110 seq. (IV^{p}).

naked man wearing a *basileion*, a royal crown, who in his right hand is holding a sword up against his head, and in his left a staff (*rhabdos*).[92] The title of the recipe, ‘Dream request from Bes’, confirms that this is intended as a figure of that deity. Now terracotta figurines of an armed Bes, the dwarf god associated not merely with the protection of childbirth but also, in the late period, with power over the very source of life, are common enough, and our drawing is clearly related to this type, which was created at some time in the Ptolemaic period.[93] In the figurines, the god wears a triple ostrich-feather crown, of which the three-pronged ‘*basileion*’ in the drawing is a crude simplification, and his sword is usually long enough to pass in front of the crown, which again the drawing misrepresents. Though some of these figures wear a Roman-type cuirass, the type is generally naked except for a breech-clout, as in the drawing. But the major deviation of the latter from the terracotta type of Bes as warrior is the absence of the round or oval shield held in the left hand, for which the drawing deliberately substitutes a staff of an unrecognisable kind, but which is certainly intended as a *wꜣs* (or a *d‘m*) sceptre, often carried by pantheistic Bes images of the late period.[94] The drawing thus derives its force from its reproduction of one of the central divinities in popular (but not only popular) religion: terracotta figurines of Bes most likely stood in virtually every house, even if they were not regularly used to procure visions or dreams. The practitioner appropriates the power inherent in the figure by drawing it onto his own hand and covering it with the black ‘cloth of Isis’;[95] he might well (though this is not in fact here stipulated) have been required to ingest the ink, by licking it off his hand, or washing it off and then drinking the water.[96]

---

[92] Lines 105–08; the instructions actually state that the sword is to rest on the neck or throat.

[93] The relation between drawing and the terracottas was noted by Hofner 1924/1983–99 §187. Compare Weber 1914, 162 nos. 256–60 with pl. 25; Bayer-Niemeier 1988, 196–98 nos. 427–34; Dunand 1990, 38–41 nos. 30–40; Török 1995, 34–37 nos. 14–18. Although the type is Ptolemaic, Bes as a warrior emerges from the leonine dwarf of the Middle Kingdom whose sobriquet was *w‘w* (*Aha*), ‘soldier’. The sword connotes the power to ward off evil, and then power *tout court*, cf. Altenmüller 1973.

[94] E.g. by the pantheistic Bes of the upper register of the reverse of the Metternich stele (IV cent. BC) and the Brooklyn papyrus (see Kákosy and Roccati 1985, 61 fig. 13; 113 fig. 1; also Koenig 1994, 103 and 127), where the *wꜣs* sceptre is also held in the left hand.

[95] ‘Black cloth’: cf. Plutarch, *De Iside* 39, 366e2 with Griffiths 1970, 451.

[96] On ingesting ink in earlier Egyptian magic, see Ritner 1993, 92–102, though

The second example of a drawing occurs in the context of a *thumokatochos*, a spell for allaying someone's wrath, which has been re-edited into a *hypotaktikon*, a spell to subject another to one's will.[97] The brief incantation, directed to the god Seth, is prefaced by a series of *onomata barbara* enclosing a rectangular box, resting on a snake, and surmounted by two animal heads (Fig. 8). The box almost certainly represents the coffin of Osiris, Plutarch's *larnax*, the box in which he was killed by Seth, and later buried, or which, according to an alternate version, Isis found in Byblos.[98] The two animal heads are probably those of asses, the animal of Seth, which have been substituted for the images of Re which usually appear on Egyptian images of the coffin (Osiris, the sun-by-night, being his counterpart).[99] Already in the New Kingdom Seth ceased to be considered exclusively evil, and became a member of the 'crew' of Re's barque, defending Re against the serpent Apophis, the concrete form of the forces of darkness which threaten the Sun on its daily course through the two skies.[100] It is in this capacity that he is often invoked in the magical papyri.[101] The snake beneath the coffin is certainly Apophis, so that the drawing evokes the long Egyptian tradition of execrations upon the forces of disorder (which include subjecting Apophis to violent assault and indignity).[102] Indeed, since one of the names of Apophis was *Nk w*, the Vanquished One, we may suspect that the enemies to be subjugated and suppressed by this spell are in a sense represented by the snake, just as in earlier temple ritual spells against Apophis were explicitly directed not just against the Pharaoh but against private enemies.[103]

There are however a number of cases in which this merely evocative use of a divine image gives way to a 'performative' image, as

---

in my view the form(s) found in the magical papyri are not a mere continuation of these earlier practices.

[97] *PGM* VII 940–968.

[98] Cf. Plutarch, *De Iside* 13, 356bc; 15, 357a; 18, 357f–358a; 39, 366d; found by Seth: 8, 354a. The word σορός, coffin, is elsewhere used for it: 15, 357a6; 16, 357d2; 44, 368d10.

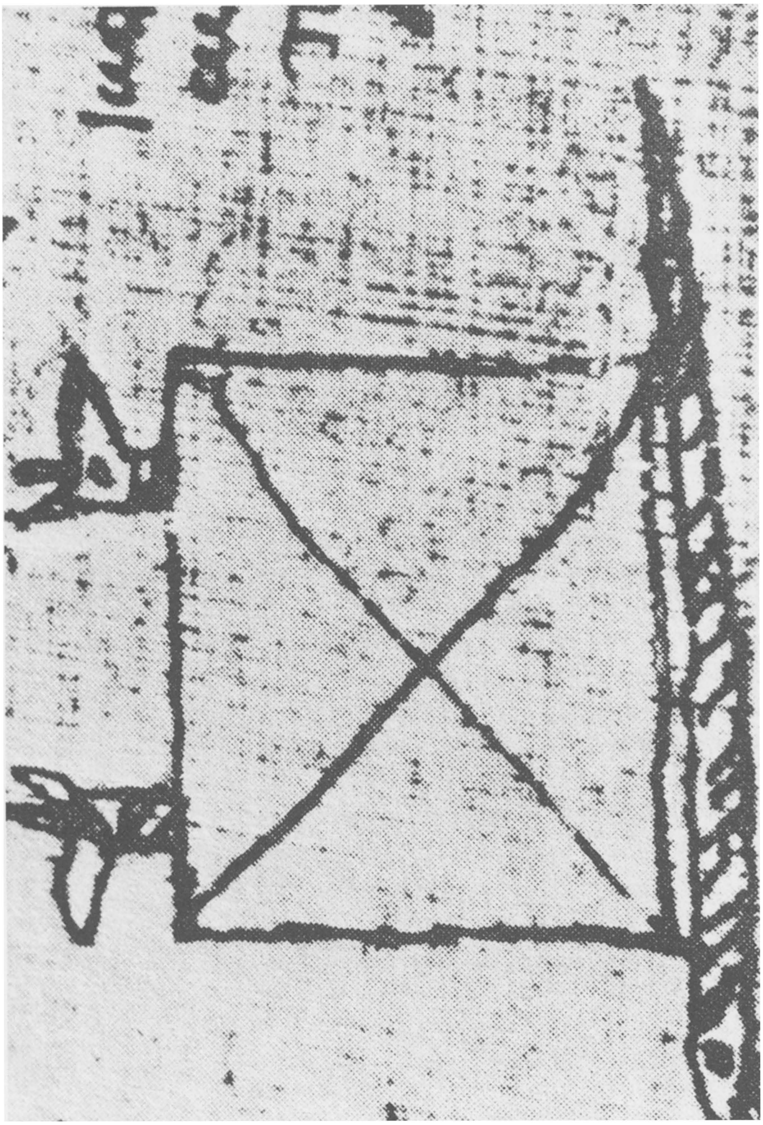
[99] Cf. Hopfner, 1924/1983–90, 230 §142; Grumach 1970, 170f. This is more likely than the possibility that they represent jackals (Anubis).

[100] Nagel 1929; te Velde 1977, 100f.

[101] Fauth 1995, 48.

[102] Koenig 1994, 144–49; Ritner 1995, 161 n. 748, 210–12 (on the last section of the Bremner-Rhind papyrus).

[103] Ritner 1995, 184f.



8. Drawing of the coffin of Osiris from *P.Brit.Mus.* gr. CXXI, col. 27 = *PGM* VII 942–51 (III/IVp).

it were, an image which tells the power invoked what he has to do, which proleptically sets in motion the malign intention of the *praxis*. The practitioners who chose to use such images did so in two ways: they either imagined the *daemon* at work on his victim, or they imagined the victim 'caught', either by words or by 'knots'. Good examples of the first option are found in the illustrations to *P.Oslo* 1, which was acquired by Sam Eitrem in 1920 in the Fayyûm, and is the last important and complete magical papyrus to have come to light. One of these, flanked by two large 'hearts', represents an 'angelos' (a *daimôn*), dressed rather like a gladiator, apparently with a cock's head, and walking to the l. (Fig. 9).[104] In his r. hand he carries a large sword upright, in the manner of late antique executioners; in his l., he holds by the hair a human head, attached to a tiny body. The legs are squirming helplessly, trying to reach the ground. This scene surely is inspired indirectly at least by public executions,[105] but its force here is to give guidance to the 'angels' who have been invoked to 'dry up' the body of the victim. In the second, which illustrates a spell for erotic magic, a large squat *daimôn*, apparently headless, again flanked by formal devices ('wings'), walks to the l. (Fig. 10).[106] In his r. hand he seems to hold a whip (not illustrated), and in his l., once again, the victim, all head and hair, helplessly hanging. Here again, the illustration picks up elements of the spell: the woman is to come speeding to the client ἀεροπετουμένην, 'speeding through the air', dried out, hungry, sleepless (the victim's eyes are staring wide).

The second possibility can be illustrated briefly by means of two drawings showing victims without *daimones*: the practitioner's mind is here fully engaged upon the victim, not upon the machinery. One of them, from the Isthmus at Corinth, is from a curse against athletes (Fig. 11).[107] On one side, it depicts four men, Kronion, Seleukos, Epilenaios and Marcion, each of them overwritten by his name and the word κάτεχε, 'catch!' or 'seize!', an injunction to the power

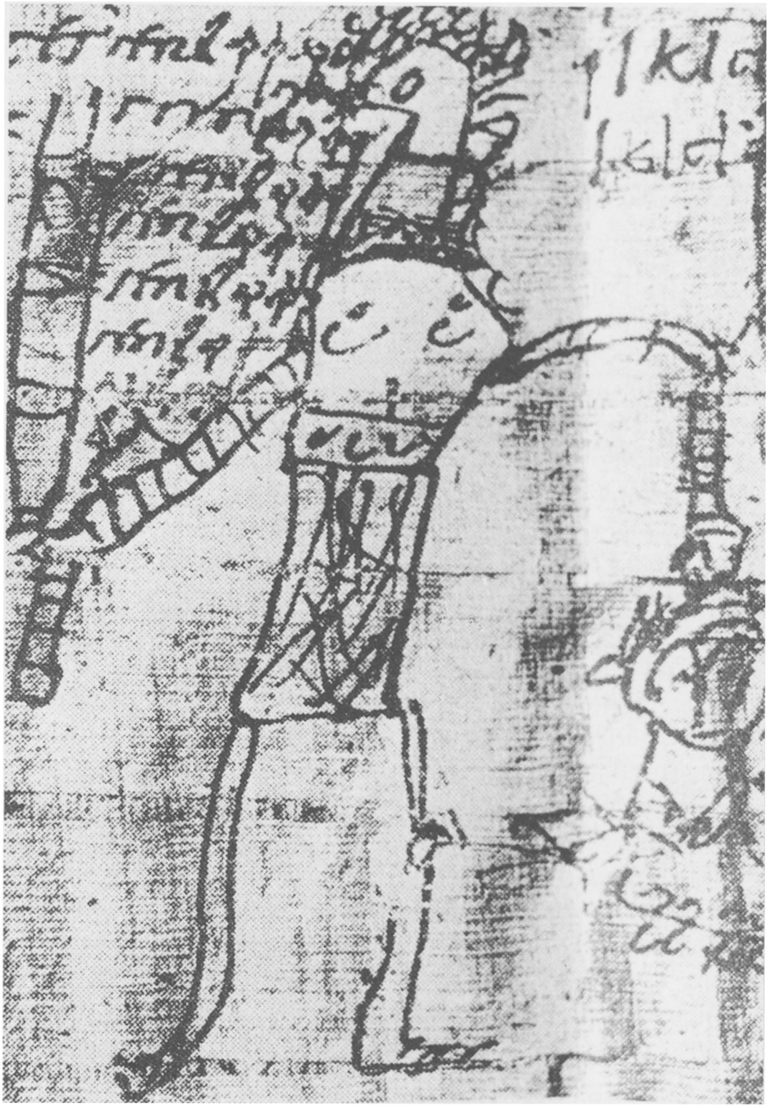
---

[104] *PGM* XXXVI 241–45. The original is in the Oslo University Library. Another of the illustrations, to XXXVI 69–101, certainly shows a cock-headed *daimôn*, but it is an erotic spell.

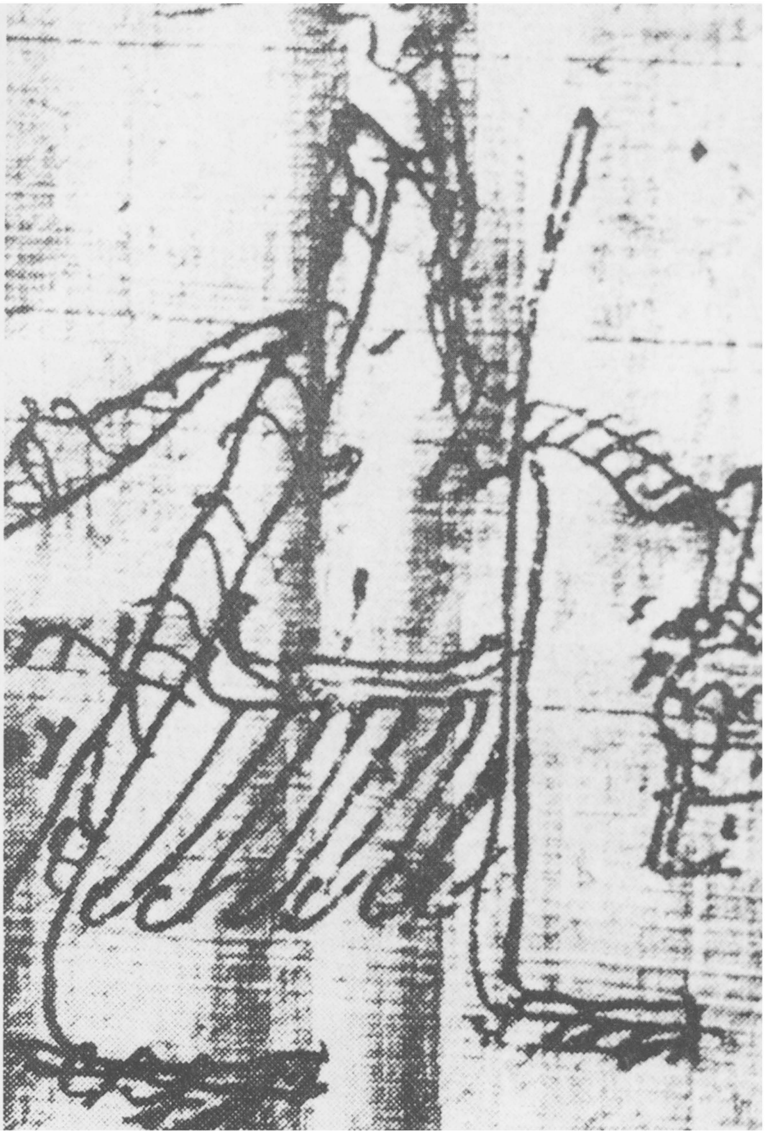
[105] The *praxis* (231–55) calls for a frog to be slit open, the inscribed lead *lamella* to be folded up and stuffed inside, the frog to be sewn up again and hung up on a reed to dry out in the sun. This must also have some relation, I think, to contemporary executions and the exposure of corpses on gibbets.

[106] *PGM* XXXVI 115–33.

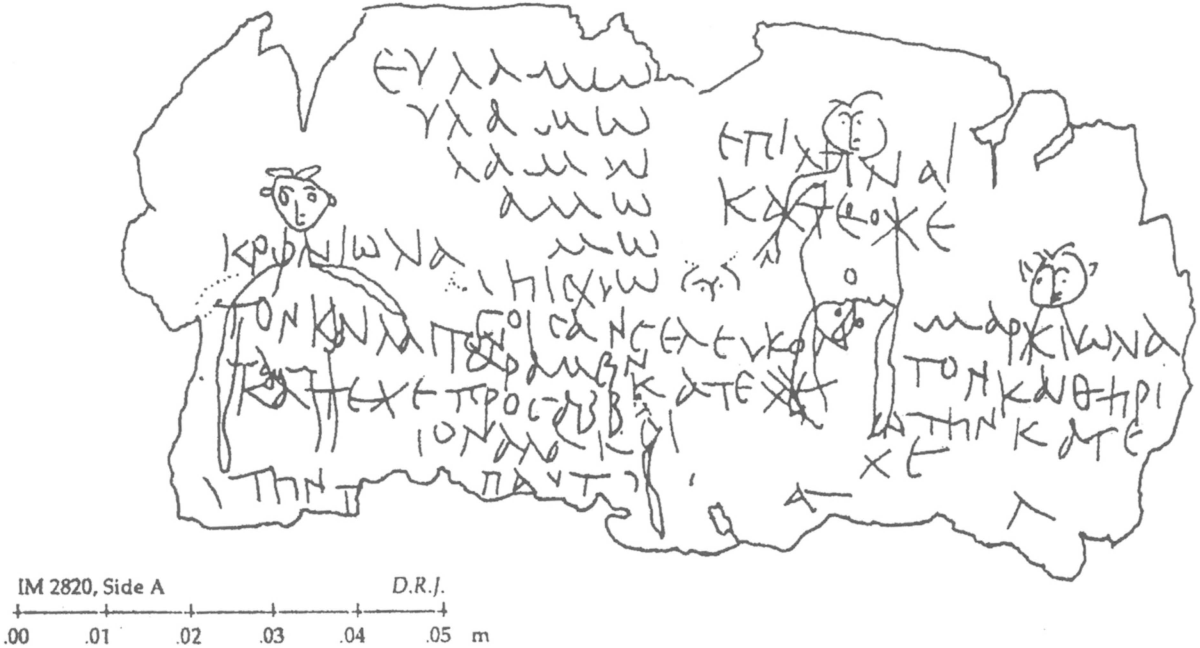
[107] Jordan 1994, 116 no. 5.



9. *Daimôn* invoked for malign magic, carrying off the victim, from *P.Oslo* 1 = *PGM* XXXVI 241–45 (Fayyûm, IV^{p}).



10. *Daimôn* invoked for erotic magic, dragging the woman, from *P.Oslo* 1 = *PGM* XXXVI 115–33.


IM 2820, Side A
D.R.J.
.00
.01
.02
.03
.04
.05 m

11. Drawing of four athletes, overwritten with their names and the word κάτεχε, 'catch!' or 'seize!', from the Isthmus (?III^{p}): Jordan 1994, 116 no. 5.

invoked (there is a visually-dominant ευλαμω-'wing' between the two central runners). The second, from the circus at Carthage, shows a charioteer twisted up and encumbered by 'knots', the circles representing diagrammatically the curse being directed at the victim.[108]

Once again, these proleptic images were secret, unseen by anyone except the practitioner and his addressee(s). They suggest that it was precisely in malign magic, generally considered the most difficult to perform, that special efforts were felt necessary to increase the force of the text. Whatever interests the priests of the 'House of Life' and their imitators elsewhere may have had in social power, in their own self-definition it was their magical power which was crucial, and which they ceaselessly sought, by a variety of means, some of which I have examined here, to increase.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Altenmüller, H., s.v. 'Bes', in: *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* 1 (1973) 720–24.

Audollent, A., *Defixionum tabellae* (Paris 1904).

Bayer-Niemeier, E., *Griechisch-römische Terrakotten. Liebighaus-Museum alter Plastik. Bildwerke der Sammlung Kaufmann*, 1 (Melsungen 1988).

Betz, H.-D. (ed.), *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, including the Demotic spells* (Chicago 1986, ^{2}1993).

Blowers, P., Origen, the Rabbis and the Bible: towards a picture of Judaism and Christianity in third-century Caesarea, in: C. Kannengießer and W. Petersen (eds.), *Origen of Alexandria: his world and his legacy* (South Bend, Indiana 1988) 96–116.

Bodel, J. (ed.), *Epigraphic Evidence: ancient history from inscriptions* (London 2001).

Bonner, C., *Studies in Magical Amulets, chiefly Egyptian* (Michigan Studies, Humanistic Series 49, Ann Arbor 1952).

Borghouts, J.F. (ed., tr.), *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts* (Nisaba 9, Leiden 1978).

Boys-Stones, G.R., *Post-Hellenistic Philosophy: a study in its development from the Stoics to Origen* (Oxford 2001).

Brashear, W., Ein Berliner Zauberpapyrus, *ZPE* 33 (1979) 261–78.

——, The Greek Magical Papyri: an introduction and survey; annotated bibliography (1928–94), in: *ANRW* II,18,5 (1995) 3379–3684.

Ciraolo, L.J., Supernatural Assistants in the Greek Magical Papyri, in: Meyer and Mirecki 1995, 279–95.

Crippa, S., Entre vocalité et écriture: les voix de la Sibylle et les rites vocaux des magiciens, in: C. Batsch, U. Egelhaaf-Gaiser, R. Stepper (eds.), *Zwischen Krise und Alltag. Conflit et normalité* (Stuttgart 1999) 95–110.

Cumont, F., *L'Égypte des astrologues* (Paris 1937).

Daniel, R., *Two Greek Magical Papyri in the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden: a photographic edition of J 384 and J 395 (= PGM XII and XIII)* (Abhandlungen der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Papyrologica Coloniensia 19, Opladen 1991).

---

[108] Jordan 1988, 129 no. 3 (fig. 2).

Daniel, R. and Maltomini, F. (edd., comm.), *Supplementum Magicum* (Abhandlungen der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Papyrologica Coloniensia 16.1–2, Opladen 1990–92).

Delatte, A. and Derchain, P., *Les intailles magiques gréco-égyptiennes*, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Médailles et Antiques (Paris 1964).

Deonna, W., ABRA, ABRACA: la croix-talisman de Lausanne, *Genava* 22 (1944) 131–33.

Dickie, M., The Learned Magician and the Collection and Transmission of Magical Lore, in: D.R. Jordan, H. Montgomery, E. Thomassen (eds.), *The World of Ancient Magic: Papers from the first International Samson Eitem Seminar at the Norwegian Institute, Athens 4–8 May 1997* (Bergen 1999) 163–93.

——. *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World* (London and New York 2001).

Dillon, J., The Magical Power of Names in Origen and Later Platonism, in: *Origeniana tertia. Third Colloquium for Origen Studies, Rome 1981* (Rome 1985) 203–16.

Dornseiff, F., *Das Alphabet in Mystik und Magie* (Στοίχεια: Studien zur Geschichte des antiken Weltbildes und der griechischen Wissenschaft 7, Leipzig and Berlin 1925).

Dunand, F., *Catalogue des terres cuites gréco-romaines d'Égypte*, Musée du Louvre, Département des antiquités égyptiennes (Paris 1990).

Eitrem, S. *Les papyrus magiques de Paris* (Skrifter utg. av Videnskapsselskapet i Kristiania, Hist-filos. Kl., 1923, 1, Kristiania 1923).

Eitrem, S., Die rituelle διαβολή, *SO* 2 (1924) 43–61.

Ernst, U., *Carmen figuratum. Geschichte des Figurengedichts von den antiken Ursprüngen bis zum Ausgang des Mittelalters* (Cologne 1991).

Étienne, M., *Heka: magie et envoûtement dans l'Égypte ancienne* (Les dossiers du Musée du Louvre 57, Paris 2000).

Faraone, C., *Ancient Greek Love Magic* (Cambridge, Mass. 1999).

Faraone, C.A., Handbooks and Anthologies: the collection of Greek and Egyptian incantations in late Hellenistic Egypt, *ARG* 2 (2000) 195–214.

Fauth, W., *Helios megistos: Zur synkretistischen Theologie der Spätantike* (Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 125, Leiden 1995).

Fernández Marcos, N., Motivos judios en los papiros magicos griegos, in: Fr. Javier Lomas (prol.), *Religion, Superstición y magia en el mundo romano* (Cadiz 1985) 101–27.

Foucher, L., *Hadrumetum* (Paris 1964).

Fowden, G., *The Egyptian Hermes: a historical approach to the late pagan mind* (Cambridge 1986).

Frankfurter, D., Narrating Power: the theory and practice of the magical *historiola* in ritual spells, in: Meyer and Mirecki 1995, 457–76.

——, Ritual Expertise in Roman Egypt and the Problem of the Category 'Magician', in: Schäfer and Kippenberg (1997) 115–35.

——, *Religion in Roman Egypt: assimilation and resistance* (Princeton 1998).

——, The Consequences of Hellenism in Late Antique Egypt: religious worlds and actors, *ARG* 2 (2000) 162–94.

Gardiner, A.H., s.v. 'Magic (Egyptian)', in: *Hastings' Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* 8 (1915) 262a–269a.

Gelzer, Th., Lurje, M., Schäublin, Chr. (edd., comm.), *Lamella Bernensis. Ein spätantikes Goldamulett mit christlichem Exorzismus* (Stuttgart and Leipzig 1999).

Gordon, R.L., "Quaedam veritatis umbrae": Hellenistic magic and astrology, in: P. Bilde et al. (eds.), *Conventional Values of the Hellenistic Greeks* (Studies in Hellenistic Civilization 8, Aarhus 1997a) 128–58.

——, Reporting the Marvellous: private divination in the Greek magical papyri, in: Schäfer and Kippenberg (1997b) 65–92.

Graf, F., *Communio loquendi cum dis*: Magie und Kommunikation, in: G. Binder and K. Ehrlich (eds.), *Stätten und Formen der Kommunikation im Altertum 6: Religiöse Kommunikation—Formen und Praxis vor der Neuzeit* (Bochumer altertumswissenschaftliches Colloquium 26, Trier 1997) 119–39.

Griffiths, J.G. (tr., comm.), *Plutarch: De Iside et Osiride* (Cardiff 1970).

Gundel, W. and H.G., *Astrologumena. Die astrologische Literatur in der Antike und ihre Geschichte* (Sudhoffs Archiv, Beiheft 6, Wiesbaden 1966).

Harrauer, C., *Meliouchos: Studien zur Entwicklung religiöser Vorstellungen in griechischen synkretistischen Zaubertexten* (Wiener Studien, Beiheft 11, Vienna 1987).

Hauer, J.W., *Die Dhāranī im nördlichen Buddhismus und ihre Parallelen in der sogennanten Mithrasliturgie* (Stuttgart 1927).

Hirschle, M. *Sprachphilosophie und Namenmagie im Neuplatonismus* (Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie 96, Meidenheim 1976).

Hopfner, T., Der Tierkult der alten Ägypter nach den griechischen und lateinischen Berichten und den wichtigsten Denkmälern, *Denkschriften der Wiener Akademie der Wissenschaften* 57, Abhandlung 2 (Vienna 1913).

——, *Griechisch-ägyptischer Offenbarungszauber* 1 (Amsterdam 1974). (Typographic rescension of the handwritten edition, Leipzig 1921).

——, *Griechisch-ägyptischer Offenbarungszauber* 2 (Amsterdam 1983–90). (Typographic rescension of the handwritten edition, Leipzig 1924).

Janovitz, N., Theories of Divine Names in Origen and Pseudo-Dionysius, *HR* 30 (1990) 359–72.

——, *Magic in the Roman World* (London and New York 2001).

Jordan, D.R., *CIL* VIII 19525 B2, QPVULVA = *q(uem) p(eperit) vulva, Philologus* 120 (1976) 127–32.

——, A Survey of Greek Defixiones not Included in the Special Corpora, *GBRS* 26 (1985) 151–97.

——, New Defixiones from Carthage, in: J.H. Humphrey (ed.), *The Circus and a Byzantine Cemetery at Carthage* I (1988) 117–134.

——, Inscribed Lead Tablets from the Games in the Sanctuary of Poseidon, *Hesperia* 63 (1994) 111–26.

——, Notes from Carthage, *ZPE* 111 (1996) 115–23.

Kákosy, L., s.v. 'Heka', in: *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* 2 (1977) 1108–10.

Kákosy, L. and Roccati, A., *La magia in Egitto ai tempi dei Faraoni* (Modena 1985).

Kenyon, F.G. (ed.), *Greek Papyri in the British Museum, 1* (London 1893).

Koenig, Y., *Magie et magiciens dans l'Égypte ancienne* (Paris 1994).

Kotansky, R., *Greek Magical Amulets. The inscribed gold, silver, copper and bronze lamellae* 1: *Published texts of known provenance* (Abhandlungen der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Papyrologica Coloniensia 22, Opladen 1994).

Lange, N.R.M. de, *Origen and the Jews: studies in Jewish-Christian relations in third-century Palestine* (Cambridge 1976).

Lauterbach, J.Z., Substitutes for the Tetragrammaton, *PAAJR* 2 (1930–1) 39–67.

Lenz, C., s.v. 'Carmina figurata', in: *RfAC* 2 (1954) 910–12.

Lieban, R., *Cebuano Sorcery: Malign magic in the Philippines* (Berkeley 1967).

Lippmann, E.A., *Musical Thought in Ancient Greece* (New York 1964).

Martinez, D.G., *A Greek Love Charm from Egypt (P.Mich. 757)* (P. Michigan 16, Atlanta, Ga. 1991).

Mastrocinque, A., *Studi sul Mitraismo (il Mitraism e la magia)* (Rome 1998).

Merkelbach, R. and Totti, M. (edd., comm.), *Abrasax: Ausgewählte Papyri religiösen und magischen Inhalts* 1: *Gebete* (Abhandlungen der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Papyrologica Coloniensia 17,1, Opladen 1990).

Meyer, M. and Mirecki, P. (edd.), *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 129, Leiden 1995).

Miller, P.C., In Praise of Nonsense, in: A.H. Armstrong (ed.), *Classical Mediterranean Spirituality: Egyptian, Greek, Roman* (London 1986) 481–505.

Nagel, G., Seth dans la barque solaire, *BIFAO* 28 (1929) 33–39.

Pettinato, R., *Die Ölwahrsagung bei den Babyloniern* (Studi Semitici 21–2, Rome 1966).

PGM = Preisendanz, K. and Henrichs, A. (eds.), *Die griechischen Zauberpapyri*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart 1973–74).

Philipp, H., *Mira et Magica: Gemmen im Ägyptischen Museum der Staatlichen Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin-Charlottenburg* (Mainz 1986).

Preisendanz, K. et al. (edd.), *Die griechischen Zauberpapyri*, 2 vols. (Leipzig and Berlin 1928–31).

——, Die griechischen und lateinischen Zaubertafeln: 1, *APF* 9 (1930) 119–54.

——, Die griechischen und lateinischen Zaubertafeln: 2, *APF* 11 (1935) 153–64.

——, Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der spätantiken Magie, in: *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen*, Beiheft 75 (Festgabe für Georg Leyh) (Leipzig 1950) 223–40.

——, Zur synkretistischen Magie im römischen Ägypten, in: *Akten der 8. internazionalen Kongresses für Papyrologie* (Vienna 1955) 111–25. [= Mitteilungen aus der Papyrussammlung der Österreichschen Nationalbibliothek, n.s. 5 (Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer), Vienna.]

——, s.v. 'Fluchtafeln', in: *RfAC* 8 (1969) 1–29.

Preisendanz, K., and Henrichs, A. (eds.), *Die griechischen Zauberpapyri*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart 1973–74).

Reitzenstein, R., *Poimandres. Studien zur griechisch-ägyptischen und frühchristlichen Literatur* (Leipzig 1904).

Reller, H., Kießig, M. and Tschoerner, H. (eds.), *Handbuch: religiöse Gemeinschaften* (Gütersloh 1993^4).

Richman, W., *Tiere in den Zauberpapyri* (Unpubl. PhD. Diss., Berlin 1940/46).

Ritner, R.K., *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice* (Oriental Institute, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 54, Chicago 1993).

——, Egyptian Magical Practice under the Roman Empire: the Demotic spells and their religious context, in: *ANRW* II,18,5 (1995) 3333–78.

——, The religious, Social, and Legal Parameters of Traditional Egyptian Magic, in: Meyer and Mirecki 1995, 43–60.

Rohrbacher-Sticker, C., Die Namen Gottes und die Namen Metratons. Zwei Genizah-Fragmente zur *Hekalot*-Literatur, *FJB* 19 (1991–2) 95–168.

Sauneron, S., Le monde du magicien égyptien, in: G. Condominas (ed.), *Le monde du sorcier* (Sources orientales 7, Paris 1966) 27–65.

Sawyer, J., *Sacred Languages and Sacred Texts* (London and New York 1999).

Sfameni, C., Magia e potere delle imagini: il caso dei soggetti egiziani, in: A. Mastrocinque (ed.), *Gemme gnostiche e cultura ellenistica* (Rome, forthcoming).

Sicherl, M., *Die Tiere in der griechisch-ägyptischen Zauberei* (Unpubl. PhD. Diss., Prague 1937).

Śliwa, J., *Egyptian Scarabs and Magical Gems from the Collection of C. Schmidt-Ciążński* (Studia z Archeologii Śródziemnomorskiej 11, Cracow 1989).

Smelik, K.A.D. and Hemelrijk, E.A., 'Who knows what monsters demented Egypt worships?' Opinions on Egyptian animal worship in Antiquity as part of the ancient conception of Egypt, in: *ANRW* II.17.4 (1984) 1852–2000.

Smith, M., Relations between Magical Papyri and Magical Gems, in: *Actes XV^e Congrès international de Papyrologie, Bruxelles 1979* (Papyrologica Bruxellensia 18, Brussels 1979) 3: 129–37.

——, The Eighth Book of Moses and How it Grew (*P.Leid.* J 395), in: *Atti del XVII Congresso internazionale di Papirologia, Napoli 1984* (Naples 1984) 683–93.

——, *P.Leid.* J 395 (*PGM* XIII) and its creation legend, in: A. Caquot et al. (edd.), *Hellenica et Judaica: Hommages à V. Nikiprowetzky* (Leuven and Paris 1986) 491–8.

Velde, H. te, *Seth, God of Confusion: a study of his role in Egyptian mythology and religion* (Probleme der Ägyptologie 6, Leiden 1977).

Török, L., *Hellenistic and Roman Terracottas from Egypt* (Bibliotheca Archaeologica 15, Rome 1995).

Urbach, E.E., *The Sages: their concepts and beliefs* (Cambridge, Mass. 1987).

Verdenius, W.J., Gorgias' Doctrine of Deception, in: G.B. Kerferd (ed.), *The Sophists and their Legacy* (Hermes Einzelschriften 44, Wiesbaden 1981) 116–28.

Versnel, H.S., Les imprécations et le droit, *RD* 65 (1987) 5–22.

——, Beyond Cursing: the appeal to justice in judicial prayers, in: C.A. Faraone and D. Obbink (eds.), *Hiera magika: Ancient Greek magic and religion* (New York and Oxford 1991a) 60–106.

——, Some Reflections on the Relationship Magic—Religion, *Numen* 38 (1991b) 177–97.

——, Die Poetik der Zaubersprüche, in: T. Schabert and R. Brague (eds.), *Die Macht des Wortes* (Munich 1996) 233–97.

——, καὶ εἴ τι λ[οιπὸν] τῶν μερ[ῶ]ν [ἔσ]ται σώματος ὅλ[ο]υ[. . . (. . . and any other part of the entire body there may be . . .). An essay on anatomical curses, in: F. Graf (ed.), *Ansichten griechischer Rituale: Geburtstagssymposium für Walter Burkert, Castelen 15–18 März 1996* (Stuttgart and Leipzig 1998) 217–67.

Vogliano, A., *Secondo rapporto degli scavi condotti dalla missione archeologica d'Egitto della Reale Università di Milano nella zona di Medinet Madi* (Milan 1937).

Weber, W., *Die ägyptisch-griechischen Terrakotten*, Königliche Museen zu Berlin (Berlin 1914).

Winkler, H.A., *Siegel und Charakter in der mohammedanischen Zauberei* (Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des islamischen Orients 7, Berlin and Leipzig 1930).

——, Die Aleph-Beth-Regel: eine Beobachtung an sinnlosen Wörtern in Kinderversen, Zaubersprüchen und verwandtem, in: E. Paret (ed.), *Studien für E. Littmann* (Leiden 1935) 1–24.

Wojaczek, G., *Daphnis: Untersuchungen zur griechischen Bukolik* (Beiträge zur klass. Philologie 34, Meisenheim 1969).

Wortmann, D., Neue magische texte, *BJ* 168 (1968) 56–111.

Zwierlein-Diehl, E., *Magische Amulette des Instituts für Altertumskunde der Universität zu Köln* (Abhandlungen der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Papyrologica Coloniensia 20, Opladen 1992).

WHAT IS NEW ABOUT GREEK SACRIFICE?

Fritz Graf

1. *Introduction*

It seems superfluous, here and today, to underline the crucial role ritual has for an adequate understanding of ancient religion—the methodological change associated with the names of Vernant and Burkert focussed on this, and many contributions made by Henk Versnel to our field do the same, both for Greece and for Rome, starting, of course, with *Triumphus*. Still, nearly everything we know of ancient ritual—at least from the texts; the archaeological evidence is, in some respect, less biassed—is beset by two problems: it is fragmentary, and it tends to be not the ordinary, but the aberrant item.

In order to handle this material, scholars always had the tendency to look to other disciplines, especially ethnology, social anthropology and, with its becoming more scholarly, history of religion for help: after all, the ethnographical descriptions offer entire contexts, ritual scenarios from which one hoped to fill the gaps in our record about antiquity; while social anthropology and history of religions, both dealing with understanding how societies and their institutions work, went into the business of wide theorizing.

Ethnological parallels could be used in order to bring structure into our fragmentary documentation on Greek rituals: this has been done e.g. by Jeanmaire and Brelich for initiation rituals, and it has yielded interesting results. But more often, it has proved more profitable to use anthropology as a provider of interpretative models, without relying on detailed comparison; details have to be understood from inside Greek culture—this has been not only the method of the Paris school, but of Henk Versnel as well.[1]

The problem, though, is not where to find interpretative models, the problem is that social anthropologists and historians of religion each came up with several widely divergent theories of ritual; they range from a benignly catholic functionalism (which still has its allures) to positions where ritual becomes mere communication (that is content: Edmund Leach) or where, to the contrary, ritual is essentially meaningless (that is pure form, like music: Frits Staal).[2] In their extreme forms, both positions are untenable, at least for Greek and Roman antiquity, as we shall see in concreto, and it seems no coincidence that one form is associated with an indologist, the other with a social anthropologist. Ritual, in Greek and Roman culture, is more than content and message, it performs changes in the world, and it is more than pure form, since meaning is inherent in its symbols.

---

[1] But see the rather abrasive criticism of the Vernant school by Mario Vegetti 1980, 265–272, adopted by Cristiano Grottanelli 1988, 5–8.

Despite the problems involved, in what follows I propose to try out one of the existing models, the one which sees ritual as a chain of signs for communication.[3] The model is neither new nor spectacular, but it has the advantage of preventing too hasty impositions of meaning from one's own culture.

2. *Ritual and Communication*

As a starting point, I would formulate that rituals are chains of symbols whose meaning is based on a group consensus which allows every group member to spot a mistake (or a deliberate modification) in its execution, and which is handed down from generation to generation: thus, ritual has meaning (though this meaning is not necessarily intrinsic, but culturally imposed), and it is both traditional and collective. This has several consequences:

(a) Since ritual signs are collective, individualistic interpretations are not to be relied upon, neither those of an ancient participant or scholar nor of a modern psychologist. Psychologists tend to rely on individual psychology, while ritual does not necessarily inform about individual feelings and perceptions.

(b) Since the meaning is transmitted inside a given culture through its own specific tradition, interpretation has to rely on this culture: a priori, there is no cogent reason why a given symbol should have the same meaning in two different cultures. As with foreign linguistic signs, we have to learn their meaning from inside a given culture.

---

[2] Edmund Leach 1976, 81–93; Frits Staal 1989.

[3] See for the basic text-book Edmund Leach 1976; for the criticism Dan Sperber 1974.

In a Sausurrian way of speaking: we behave as if ritual signs were absolutely arbitrary.

This, of course, begs a major question in ritual studies. Cross-cultural identity of meaning exists, and it can have two sources. The one is biological, a common human experience: when, in the ritual of Artemis Tauropolus in Halai Araphenides, a young man's throat is ritually grazed with a sword until some blood flows,[4] we immediately see the symbolic killing meant by the ritual, since it is our experience that humans usually die when their throats are cut (and, if one needs them, there are close parallels both from ancient and modern times);[5] but it must be remarked that this already involves one major jump, from the action of grazing a throat to its significance of cutting a throat. The other reason is not that far away, but has a much deeper historical background: it is the shared biological outfit which ethology explores and which especially Walter Burkert applied so magisterially to interpretation of ritual and religion, with some very convincing results.[6]

Still, both cases do not contradict the general rule—they might concern few signs only. The few common elementary exclamations shared by humans do not really contradict de Saussure's (and already Augustine's) basic assumption either, that meaning is not inherent in linguistic signs, but arbitrarily (that is, culturally) constructed.[7] Thus, it will be one focus of concern to see where meaning becomes important in ritual.

A second problem concerns the concept of communication. Religion as communication with a superhuman power is a view that makes sense only inside any given religious culture, since it presupposes the objective reality of these powers: outside any given religious culture, the divinity who receives the message loses any real existence. This has two corollaries:

(a) In the outsiders' view communication can be horizontal only, between the members of the same society. Or rather, if applied to the three basic theoretical approaches to religion that Henk Versnel differentiated a couple of years ago, horizontal communication is vital both in Durkheimian sociology where religion creates social cohesion, and in its more recent successors where religion is a way of creating meaning. The evolutionists, Versnel's third group, are somewhat less easy to understand in this reading: since for the evolutionists the human communication with the gods aims at influencing natural phenomena, this communication turns out to be a fake, without any real seriousness.[8]

---

[4] Eur. *Iph.T.* 1457–1461.

[5] An anecdote about Porsenna, Plut. *Cohib. ira* 9,458 A; a symbolic killing in a Syrian rite of revenge, Erich Samter 1911, 183; the initiation ritual of the Nyende in Northern Benin, Hugo Huber 1979, 24f.

[6] Walter Burkert 1983; id. 1996.

[7] For Augustine, see Eugenio Coseriu 1975, 123–145; Giovanni Manetti 1993, 157–168.

(b) Because of this horizontal communication, some scholars have argued that god belongs into ritual only and has no outside existence, while the performing humans exist also outside their rituals. This has been the main reason for the evolutionists to reduce divinity to the force which controls man's success in his quest for happiness and wealth: in their system, it was easy to replace such a divine force by a more abstract concept like nature or natural laws, in the third evolutionary stage, the one of science. Therefore also, the sociologists, more acutely aware of the problem, replaced divinity by society (and unwittingly transformed society into a transcendental being, with a capital S.). From there the second question pursued in these short musings: where do gods enter ritual?

3. *The Rite Par Excellence: Animal Sacrifice*

But let us turn to the one test case I want to examine more closely, animal sacrifice, the quintessential ritual complex of ancient civilizations.

A. *Preliminary Remarks*

Any discussion of Greek animal sacrifice is fraught with problems[9]—even when not venturing into the maze of more recent and contradictory theories about origins and functions, debated between Walter Burkert, René Girard and Jean-Pierre Vernant (and Marcel Detienne).[10]

---

[8] Hendrik S. Versnel 1993, 6–10.

[9] Geoffrey S. Kirk 1981, 41–80 is a still healthy antidote to monocausal theories, although he sometimes tends to be hypercritical.

[10] The main expositions: Walter Burkert 1983; id. 1996; René Girard 1972; Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant 1979.—See the two sets of discussion in

Animal sacrifice being the main ritual in ancient religion means that everybody knew how it worked, that it was actualized in many smaller or larger variations, and that its general knowledge lead to bad documentation. No comprehensive account of a sacrifice exists in ancient literature; even large literary descriptions,[11] like Nestor's Pylian sacrifice to Athena or Eumaius' sacrifice in the *Odyssey*, or Aegisthus' sacrifice to the Nymphs in Euripides' *Electra* lack details which other sources—ancient commentaries and lexica and the many images[12]—contribute, nor are they always easily compatible. Thus, one should reconstruct an ideal type, but the variations make it difficult to judge what this norm should be. Still, an ideal form, or a grammar of sacrifice, must have existed in the heads of the Greeks and Romans. From this follows that sacrifice as communication by ritual signs is interesting on two levels: on the basic level of the ideal type (the one which has been fundamental to all contemporary theorists), and on the level of deviation from this model. Given the tendency of ritual signs to function in a binary way, every deviation from the ideal can become semantically important against the background of the ideal type—as three cases will show.

Ordinary sacrifice used the services of a flute-player; literary texts and votive reliefs concur, although I know of no scholarly investigation to teach me where exactly the flute went into action, and what is meant when on votive reliefs there is also a lyre player participating. There are a few sacrifices, however, without a flute-player participating: the ritual for the eponymous hero Tenes in Tenedos, where Plutarch explains the absence by a wife-of-Potiphar story,[13] or the sacrifice to the Charites on Paros, explained by the same Plutarch from Minos' mourning for Androgeos.[14] In both cases, the absence of the flute was viewed negatively, as a sign of mourning; the respective rituals are not known well enough to allow us to go much further than that.

Ordinary sacrifice ended with a common meal. All participants—in a polis sacrifice all citizens, sometimes resident foreigners or even

---

the same contexts: Walter Burkert 1981, 91–125, and Jean-Pierre Vernant 1981, 1–21; and the papers in Robert G. Hamerton-Kelly (ed.) 1987.

[11] Nestor: Hom. *Od.* 3,419ff.; Eumaios *ibid.* 14,419ff.; Aigisthos Eur. *El.* 791ff.

[12] See especially Folkert T. van Straten 1995.

[13] Plut., *Quaest. Graec.* 28,297 DE.

[14] Plut., *Praec. san.* 19,132 E; Apollod. 3,15,7.

passing travellers as well—shared meat, wine and table. All the more surprising the one sacrifice—to Poseidon in Aigina—where the participants took the meat into their private houses and ate it there, in utter silence and without the slaves being present.[15] The aition told that, in the Trojan War, most members of the Aeginetan force had died on the battle-field or when sailing home; when the few survivors came home, they were thus hidden and secretly fed by their relatives, while the entire town was mourning. Again, the myth senses a gloomy atmosphere, and any sacrifice without ensuing common meal is dismal: to repair this, the period of the Aeginetan μονόφαγοι was ended by Aphrodisia. The rite executes a temporary dissolution of social order; one might think of a New Year ritual or, since the rite is performed by members of the thiasoi, not otherwise known subgroups of the citizen body, a rite of initiation of new members (the two ideas are not mutually exclusive).

Well over ninety percent of all sacrificed animals came from four species: bovines, goats, sheep, and swine.[16] Any animal which did not belong into this norm-group became semantically important—as, e.g., the dog. Dogs are not usually eaten, at least in Greece (in Lydia, there are traces of dog sacrifice with meals),[17] and they appear in only a few sacrifices: to Ares and Enyalios, to Hekate, to the Genetyllides.[18] Structurally, the extraordinary animal goes together with an extraordinary divinity: Ares (with whom Enyalios in myth, though not in cult, is identified) and Hekate are said to be foreigners, from Thrace or Caria. We should know by now that this assumed foreignness expresses the distance of these divinities to the polis: neither the gods of brutal war nor the goddess of crossroads belong into polis-life. Nor do the Genetyllides: divinities concerned with childbirth are strangely removed from the polis as well, as if the new-born would be something wild, non-human, made human only by the rituals which adopt it into the oikos. Thus, the dog is a sign with a rather vague content.

---

[15] Plut., *Quaest. Graec.* 44, 301 EF. See Halliday ad loc.

[16] Michael H. Jameson 1988, 87–119.

[17] Sardis: C.H. Greenewalt 1979, 26.—But see [Hippocr.] *Morb. sacr.* 2,18: the meat of goats, deer, pigs and dogs is forbidden, which could point to the dog as being part of Greek diet.

[18] See F. Graf 1984, 266 and 422; recent bone analysis from excavations in Kalapodi (Artemis) and Didyma (Apollon/Artemis) brought more evidence—if the dog bones really belong to sacrifice and not to animals that died accidentally, see M. Stanzel 1991; Klaus Tuchelt 1992, 61–81.

In the light of semantics, the choice of sacrificial animals presents two fascinating but yet unsolved questions:

(a) What determines the choice of extraordinary animals—why the dog to Ares and not say the goose or the deer? At least the Genetyllides should prevent us from explaining dogs by their fierce aggressiveness.[19]

(b) Is the omni-present bovine-ovicaprine-suine majority entirely exempt from semantics? Reading the statistics in Michael Jameson's paper on 'Animal husbandry and sacrifice', and adding to them some more recent statistics from excavations,[20] one might be tempted to believe it—at least for the choice between sheep and ox/cow, where not semantics but the wealth of the sacrificer plays the decisive role. But again (and neglecting that display of wealth might be semantics enough in a competitive society), there are obvious examples of semantically motivated choices—the black ram to Persephone, the white or red ox to Helius, the billy-goat to Dionysus, the piglets to Demeter—or, on the negative side, the prohibition of goat to Asklepios (although with exceptions). Which also quite clearly shows the point where the gods come in: even if oppositions—like dog versus ordinary animal—might go back to oppositions between polis and non-polis, specific species, specific colour and specific gender, in the end, appear to be tied to a specific divinity and taught by tradition (or its purveyors, the *sacerdotes* and *haruspices* in Rome, according to Cicero).[21] Thus, the gods offer a mechanism of validating and supporting the traditional signs. But this immediately calls up a more fundamental question: why do these specific gods validate these specific signs? There were aetiological myths to explain it (the billy-goat ate the vine),[22] but that only shifts the problem; aetiological myths are a posteriori, not a priori narrations, and it is the a priori we are looking for. Up to now, nobody came up with a convincing answer, and we might as well leave the question here.

---

[19] As did Edward Kadletz 1976.

[20] Michael H. Jameson 1988; Didyma and Kalapodi above n. 18; Ephesus: Gerhard Forstenpointer, Rita Krachler, and Bernadette Schildorfer 1999, 225–31.

[21] Cicero, *De legibus* 2, 19f. 29.

[22] Ov., *Fast.* 1, 355–361, see Eckard Lefèvre 1976, 39–64.

B. *The Ideal Sacrifice*

Finally, from the interplay of semantics inside sacrifice to the ideal type of animal sacrifice as such.[23] Before looking at the details, two points need to be stressed in the light of the previous discussion:

(a) Animal sacrifice has a practical aim, the provision of edible meat: as a wedding ritual transforms a κόρη (or παρθένος) into a γυνή, sacrificial ritual transforms a living animal into neatly divided edible slices of meat. When Christianity spread in Bithynia, it severely affected the meat-market.[24] But as any butcher will confirm, a sacrifice is much more elaborate than the practical aim demands: this naive remark has always been the starting point for the theorists. It calls for an analysis of the 'superfluous' (in a pragmatical sense) ritual signs: what message do they convey?

(b) The gods enter very directly: in Greek sacrificial ideology, the gods are given the animal (or at least the parts burned). From Homer onwards, the Greeks are quite clear about it: sacrifice is a gift to the gods, and the givers think that they should get something back: Homeric Zeus seriously considers to spare Hector because of the many thighs (βοῶν μηρία) he had burnt to him in his peak sanctuary on Ida and on the acropolis,[25] Athene in the guise of Mentor prays to Poseidon to give a decent exchange (χαρίεσσαν ἀμοιβήν) for the Pylians' hecatombs which they were sacrificing to him,[26] and Plato in the Euthyphron blandly equates θυσία with δόσις, sacrifice with giving.[27] The fact that statues are literally fed—on the island of Chios where they get the splanchna into their hands or upon their knees, but also in Athens—fits in well.[28] In most recent theories of sacrifice, this ritual, though, did not play any role at all.

Each sacrifice begins with the sacrificial procession, the movement away from ordinary space into sacred space or rather perhaps from private into public space: the procession begins at the threshold of the private house.[29] A series of static signs signals this departure from daily life, in a convenient binary logic: white garments, wreaths for humans and animals, gilded animal horns. The atmosphere created by these signs is festive, and shapes humans and animals into one group: beyond the borderline of profane space, the borderline between human and animal is weakened, to say the least. The main rite in this fist phase is twofold: the containers with the things which come from outside (and are, in some sense, the practical things: barley, knife, water) are carried around the altar, which integrates them into the sacred sphere; in a complementary move, a brand from the altar fire is dipped into the water carried by the hydrophoros, and with it humans, altar, and animal alike are sprinkled.

---

[23] See the descriptions, i.a., in Paul Stengel 1920, 108–115 and Walter Burkert 1972, 10–14; a detailed analysis is Folkert T. van Straten 1995.

[24] Plin., *Epist.* 10,96,10.

[25] Hom., *Il.* 22,170f.

[26] Hom., *Od.* 3,58.

[27] Plato, *Euthyphron* 14 BD.—The topic has been several times discussed by Cristiano Grottanelli, see esp. 1988, 23–27; id. 1989/90, 45–54.

[28] Chios: Fritz Graf 1984, 40f.; Athens: Aristoph., *Av.* 55, see Folkert T. van Straten 1995, 132.

[29] Plut., *Quaest. Rom.* 5,265 A states this for Rome.

The second step centers around the prayer. The sacrificer utters it, after he or while his group are throwing barley (οὐλαί) on animal and/or altar. Barley is firmly associated with primeval food: it was the first grain men ate, according to Porphyry (that is, presumably, Theophrastus),[30] nowadays it is fed to animals, and humans eat it only in extreme situations.[31] In an Argive ritual, the first meat roasted after rekindling the hearth is obtained in exchange for barley—it thus symbolizes the period before roasted meat, when man did not yet use fire.[32] Thus, barley is opposed to ordinary grain, which again expresses liminality in a different code; but it is not eaten (as in the panspermia), but thrown away (even thrown into the fire, according to Euripides).[33] Throwing them away instead of eating them is an act of refusal: it marks the first break of primeval time, where human and animal were a unity, but where you had to refrain from eating meat and to eat barley instead. The ritual is slowly turning towards our order of things. When the same ritual act of throwing away barley reveals the knife hidden beneath them, the sacrifice of the animal is shown to belong to this new order of things. The prayer is the one unequivocal communicative act with the divinity—but it is more: since it has to be said loud (silent prayer is abhorred),[34] it is addressed to all participants in the ritual, and since it addresses the divinity in a quite superfluous plethora of details about myth and cult, it recreates the cosmic order as we know it today.

---

[30] Evidence in Walter Burkert 1972, 12 n. 16 (esp. Porph., *Abst.* 2,6).

[31] Animal food according to Plin., *Nat.* 18, 74; eaten only in extreme situations Caes., *BC* 3,47,6.

[32] Plut., *Quaest. Graec.* 24, 296 F; it is called eknisma.

[33] *IA* 1471; he is speaking about prochytai katharsioi, throwing them away having cathartic function; since ritual cleaning precedes every new beginning, this fits.

[34] See Hendrik S. Versnel 1981, 1–64, esp. 25f.; Pieter W. van der Horst 1994, 1–25; Simon Pulleyn 1997, 184–188.

In the following third ritual step, things break definitely up. The sacrificer cuts the front hair of the animal and burns it, the sacrificer (σφαγεύς) stuns or kills it outright, the women shout the *ololyge*. The cutting and burning of the hair was seen by Homer as a symbolical killing, and right he may be (although he is a native informer); as to the *ololyge*, far from being a ritual lament only, it is a specific female utterance with a very wide range of meanings—it thus expresses the splitting of a given group along the gender line.[35] By shouting their typical ritual shout, the women assert themselves as a group of their own; again, emphasis is on the world as it is ordered now.

When the animal is stunned or more rarely already dead, its head is lifted to bare the throat; the throat is cut to make the blood stream out (σφάττειν), which is collected in a bowl and shed on the altar: the animal thus is symbolically tied to the altar. Then, the symbolical acts begin to peter out, to give way to the well-known practical acts of butchering: the animal is skinned, the thighbones are cut out and covered with the fat and bits of every limb (ὠμοθετεῖν): this is the god's part. This is followed by the inspection of the entrails (so blatantly left out by Homer, but present in all later accounts): the animal's belly is opened and the entrails, especially the liver, are inspected; if they confirm that the gods accept the sacrifice, the god's part is burnt, and the entrails (σπλάγχνα) are roasted on spits and eaten by the sacrificer and his group. This marks the end of the symbolic actions; the more practical acts of butchery follow: the carcass is cut up into pieces for consumption, and the meat is cooked. This takes some time, during which a guest of honour like Telemachus in the *Odyssey* might be given a bath[36] while in later public rituals this offers itself as a space for elaborate hymns. The common meal ensues, leftovers of which ordinarily are carried home or sold: the practical end of sacrifice has fully taken over. Desacralization, requested by Hubert-Mauss and Burkert, but found somewhat missing,[37] is unnecessary: with the οὐλοχύται, the rite has begun to move back into our order of things.

---

[35] See Ludwig Deubner 1941.

[36] Hom. *Od.* 3, 464–469.

[37] See the discussion between Walter Burkert and Jean-Pierre Vernant in Geneva, above n. 10.

C. *Conclusions*

This reading, based on a reconstruction of an ideal animal sacrifice, shows how the ritual first constructs a primeval unity between man and animal, only to break it up in its development. In so far (but only in so far), it confirms Meuli's and Burkert's findings: the ritual every time has to explain the slaughtering of an animal. To publicly kill and destroy an animal for food seems to cause some embarrassment—Folkert van Straten pointed out that, among the many representations of sacrifice, the actual killing is depicted only rarely;[38] and the honorary decrees of the Roman East that very verbosely talk about all sorts of ritual acts of a benefactor, are strangely reticent about the actual sacrifice as well: those men are praised for organising lavish processions preceding the traditional sacrifices and feeding entire populations from the sacrifices; in between, there is often enough a laconic 'he sacrificed', ἐβουθύτησεν.[39] But this embarrassment does not preclude the joy of being well-fed through sacrifice, as Sarah Peirce pointed out:[40] most sacrifices were happy and merry occasions, the dominance of dark feelings is the exception.[41] Barley is not milk nor honey, it is not paradisiac food (neither are acorns, their predecessor): the killing of the animal is a necessity that does not drive us out of paradise. Still, by acting out the history of the rite—from the unity with the live animal to the corporeal unity with the eaten steaks, to put it flippantly—Greek sacrificial ritual shows that an explanation was needed. But it needs no stressing that this acting of the ritual as a path from utopian primeval times to the present day necessities does not necessarily contain a correct memory of its origins: it addresses problems in contemporary Greek society. It was left to Theophrastus and his followers to read Greek sacrificial rituals as a memory of their past.

These findings might not seem all too startling: if they amount to a theory of sacrificial ritual, it would be as reading done inside Greek culture. This reading, furthermore, builds upon the insights of former scholars, my compatriot Karl Meuli, but especially both of Jean-Pierre Vernant and of Walter Burkert. 'The new model by no means completely eradicates or replaces the old one', as Henk Versnel had written in another context.[42] In this sense, scholarship is different from selling cars: if anything, our feelings come closer to the medieval perspective that we all stand on the shoulders of giants.

---

[38] Folkert T. van Straten 1995, 102–114.

[39] Argued in detail in my Gray lectures in Cambridge (May 2000; forthcoming).

[40] Sarah Peirce 1993, 219–66.

[41] See the instances pointed out above, n. 12f.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Burkert, W., *Homo Necans. Interpretationen altgriechischer Opferriten und Mythen* (RGVV 32, Berlin and New York 1972).

——, Glaube und Verhalten. Zeichengehalt und Wirkungsmacht von Opferritualen, in: O. Reverdin and B. Grange (eds.), *Le sacrifice dans l'antiquité* (Entretiens sur l'Antiquité Classique 27, Geneva 1981) 91–125.

——, *Anthropologie des religiösen Opfers. Die Sakralisierung der Gewalt* (Carl Friedrich von Siemens Stiftung, Themen XL, München 1983).

——, *Creation of the Sacred. Tracks of Biology in Early Religions* (Cambridge, Mass. 1996).

Coseriu, E., *Die Geschichte der Sprachphilosophie von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart. Eine Übersicht*, vol. 1 (Tübingen 1975).

Detienne, M. and Vernant, J.-P., *La cuisine du sacrifice en pays grec* (Paris 1979).

Deubner, L., Ololyge und Verwandtes, *Abhandlungen Berlin* 1941, Nr. 1, repr. in: *Kleine Schriften zur klassischen Altertumskunde*, Ed. Otfried Deubner (Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie 140, Königstein/Ts. 1982) 604–634.

Forstenpointer, G., Krachler, R., Schildorfer, B., Archäozoologische Untersuchungen zu den Formen des Tieropfers im Artemisison von Ephesos, in: H. Friesinger and F. Krinziger (eds.), *100 Jahre österreichische Forschungen in Ephesos. Akten des Symposions Wien 1995* (Vienna 1999) 225–231.

Girard, R., *La violence et le sacré* (Paris 1972; English edition: *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory, Baltimore 1977).

Graf, F., *Nordionische Kulte* (Rome 1984).

Greenewalt, C.H., *Ritual Dinners in Early Historic Sardis* (Berkeley 1979).

Grottanelli, C., Uccidere, donare, mangiare. Problematiche attuali del sacrificio antico, in: C. Grottanelli and F.P. Parise (eds.), *Sacrificio e società nel mondo antico* (Rome and Bari 1988) 5–8.

——, Do ut des?, *Scienze dell'Antichità. Storia, archeologia, antropologia* 3/4 (1989/90) 45–54.

Hamerton-Kelly, R.G. (ed.), *Violent Origins. Walter Burkert, René Girard and Jonathan Z. Smith on Ritual Killing and Cultural Formation* (Stanford 1987).

van der Horst, P.W., Silent Prayer in Antiquity, *Numen* 41 (1994) 1–25.

Huber, H., *Tod und Auferstehung. Organisation, rituelle Symbolik und Lehrprogramm einer westafrikanischen Initiationsfeier* (Studia Ethnographica Friburgensia, Fribourg 1979).

Jameson, M.H., Sacrifice and Animal Husbandry in Classical Greece, in: C.R. Whittaker (ed.), *Pastoral Economies in Classical Antiquity* (Papers of the Cambridge Philological Society, Supplement 14, Cambridge 1988) 87–119.

Kadletz, E., *Animal Sacrifice in Greek and Roman Religion* (Diss. Washington University 1976).

Kirk, G.S., Some Methodological Pitfalls in the Study of Ancient Greek Sacrifice (in particular), in: O. Reverdin and B. Grange (eds.), *Le sacrifice dans l'antiquité* (Entretiens sur l'Antiquité Classique 27, Geneva 1981) 41–80.

Leach, E., *Culture and Communication. The Logic by Which Symbols Are Connected. An Introduction to the Use of Structuralist Analysis in Social Anthropology* (Cambridge 1976).

---

[42] Hendrik S. Versnel 1993, 86.

Lefèvre, E., Die Lehre von den Tieropfern in Ovids 'Fasten' 1,335–456, *Rheinisches Museum* 119 (1976) 39–64.

Manetti, G., *Theories of the Sign in Classical Antiquity* (Bloomington, Indiana 1993; Italian edition 1987).

Peirce, S., Death, Revelry, and Thysia, *Classical Antiquity* 12 (1993) 219–66.

Pulleyn, S., *Prayer in Greek Religion* (Oxford 1997).

Reverdin, O. and Grange, B. (eds.), *Le sacrifice dans l'antiquité* (Entretiens sur l'Antiquité Classique 27, Geneva 1981).

Samter, E., *Geburt, Hochzeit, Tod* (Leipzig 1911).

Sperber, D., *Le symbolisme en général* (Paris 1974). English edition: *Rethinking Symbolism. Cambridge Studies and Papers in Social Anthropology* (Cambridge 1975).

Staal, F., *Rules Without Meaning. Rituals, Mantras and the Human Sciences* (New York 1989).

Stanzel, M., *Die Tierreste aus dem Artemis-/Apollonheiligtum bei Kalapodi in Böotien/Griechenland* (Diss. med.vet. München 1991).

Stengel, P., *Die griechischen Kultusaltertümer* (HdbAW V 3, Munich 1920).

van Straten, F.T., *Hierà Kalá. Images of Animal Sacrifice in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 127, Leiden 1995).

Tuchelt, K., Tieropfer in Didyma. Ein Nachtrag, *Archäologischer Anzeiger* 1992, 61–81.

Vegetti, M., I Greci sono come gli altri?, *Materiali filosofici* 3 (1980) 265–272.

Vernant, J.-P., Théorie générale du sacrifice et mise à mort dans la θυσία grecque, in: O. Reverdin and B. Grange (eds.), *Le sacrifice dans l'antiquité* (Entretiens sur l'Antiquité Classique 27, Geneva 1981) 1–21.

Versnel, H.S., Religious Mentality in Ancient Prayer, in H.S. Versnel (ed.), *Faith, Hope and Worship. Aspects of Religious Mentality in the Ancient World* (Studies in Greek and Roman Religion 2, Leiden 1981) 1–64.

——, *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion, II. Transition and Reversal in Myth and Ritual* (Studies in Greek and Roman Religion 6, II, Leiden 1993, ^{2}1994).

THE APOCALYPSE OF JOHN AND THE IMPERIAL CULT

Henk Jan de Jonge

In an essay published in 1988, Versnel reacted to Fergus Millar's fundamental article on the role which the imperial cult played in the persecutions of the Christians.[1] Millar had contended that the imperial cult played only a minor part in the persecutions.[2] Versnel argued that the Christians' refusal to worship the emperor caused the pagans to associate the Christians with mythic examples of lawlessness and chaos. Consequently, according to Versnel, the imperial cult played a less harmless part in the persecutions than Millar had suggested.

In his essay, Versnel referred in passing to several passages in the Revelation of John, mainly to show that, in his turn, the author of this book too used mythic images to denounce his enemies.[3] In the present contribution I shall look somewhat more closely at Revelation's attitude towards the imperial cult. My question is: why was the author of Revelation so fiercely opposed to the imperial cult?

A few words must be said with regard to the place where and the time when Revelation originated. There is a general consensus that the book was written in the Roman province of Asia. As to its place of origin, Ephesus is a good candidate since the church in Ephesus is the first congregation mentioned in the list of seven churches to which the work is addressed (1:11; 2:1).[4] The book is often dated to the reign of Domitian, mainly on the basis of the testimony of Irenaeus.[5] But Irenaeus was writing in Gaul in about 180 CE. He thought that John saw his vision some 35 years before he, Irenaeus, was born. 'We would not normally regard so distant, belated and second-hand an opinion as, by itself, evidence.'[6] Moreover, he had an apologetic motive for dating Revelation not too late: if it was written after the end of Domitian's reign, its author could hardly have been a direct pupil of Jesus. Since Irenaeus attributed Revelation and the Fourth Gospel to the apostle John, the son of Zebedee, a date some time before the end of the first century was highly recommendable.

---

[1] Versnel 1988.

[2] Millar 1973.

[3] Versnel 1988, 255, with references to Rev. 12:1–4 (the dragon trying to devour the baby); 13:8, 14–18 (the beast representing the Roman emperor); 17:1–6 (the great whore representing Rome, drunk with the blood of God's people).

[4] The author only says that he 'saw' his revelation on Patmos. He does not say that he wrote his work there. Even the announcement that the author experienced his rapture on Patmos (1:9) can best be understood as a piece of literary fiction which is characteristic of the apocalyptic genre. The narrative framework of apocalyptic literature is always fiction. And one does not need to experience a rapture in order to write apocalyptically; one only needs to be familiar with the apocalyptic literary tradition. The narrative framework of Revelation made the selection of the island of Patmos, probably because banishment to an island (*relegatio in insulam*; see, e.g., *Digesta* 48.22.7.2) was a well-known punishment and Patmos was situated not too far (some fifty miles) from Ephesus.

Recently, serious doubts have been raised as to a Domitianic date.[7] A date during Trajan's reign, some time around 114 CE, seems much more plausible. In my view, Rev. 17:10 is especially compelling for a date during the time of Trajan. The author presents himself here as writing during the reign of an emperor whose successor will reign for only a short time. But how can he know that this successor will only reign for a short time unless that reign has already come to an end? In addition, the author knows that the short reign of this ruler will be followed by the reign of yet another emperor. Titus (79–81) and Nerva (96–98) ruled for remarkably short periods. Thus, the author must have written under Domitian or Trajan. But there is no firm evidence of the persecution of Christians during the time of Domitian. No pagan writer accuses Domitian of persecuting Christians. Revelation can therefore best be dated during the reign of Trajan. In any case the 'number of the beast', 666, mentioned in Rev. 13:18 and 15:2, is not incompatible with the identification of the beast as Trajan. This emperor's name in Greek, NE. TPAI. Σ. (Νέρουας Τραϊανὸς Σεβαστός [Σεβαστός = *Augustus*] can easily be read as 50 + 5 + 300 + 100 + 1 + 10 + 200 = 666. The allusions to a threat from the Parthians in 6:2, 9:14–19, and 16:12–14 are also indicative of a date during the reign of Trajan.[8] Trajan launched his attack on Parthia in 114 CE. Understandably, a date during Trajan's reign is preferred by the most recent commentator.[9]

---

[5] Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* 5.30.3.

[6] Moberley 1992, 367, 381.

[7] See, e.g., Moberley 1992; Garrow 1997, 66–72.

[8] Cf. Herzer 1999, 234.

[9] Aune 1997, 1, lviii: 'during the early part of the reign of Trajan.' In Aune's view, however, this is the date of the final redaction of the book. Considerable

The possibility cannot be ruled out that the founding of the temple in honour of Zeus Philios and Trajan in Pergamum in 114 CE formed the historical backcloth of the genesis of Revelation.[10]

The Revelation of John focusses its attention on the imperial cult in at least ten passages, scattered through chapters 13 through 20.[11] I will not discuss them here one by one. Rather, I will handle them as one body of information and distill from it the various reasons why the imperial cult filled the author of Revelation with concern, even with aversion and abhorrence. There are four main reasons. For the sake of convenience, I shall summarize them here. It should be noted beforehand that, although they are closely interrelated and even overlap in part, they are not all on the same level.

Firstly, the imperial cult entailed the risk of the persecution of Christians; in a number of cases, it led to their execution. Secondly, the vigorous propagation of the imperial cult in the author's time and the strong temptation it exerted on people to participate in it, were a menace to the still small groups of Christians in Asia. Thirdly, Revelation's principal objection to the imperial cult is that it is closely interlaced with the power of Rome and with the Roman government which the author detested. Thus, the ideology of Rome as a self-contained, self-sufficient, religiously inspired universe clashed with the equally religious world view held by the author of Revelation: in the latter's opinion, the two ideologies were incompatible and excluded each other. Fourthly, more strongly than other cults, the imperial cult had a public character. This made it difficult for Christians to abstain from participation in it without irritating their fellow townsmen. Through its markedly public nature, the imperial cult must have been especially threatening to Christians. Its public character must therefore have been a reason for their loathing for it.

Let us now look somewhat more closely at each of these reasons. The first was the fact that the imperial cult led to the persecution and execution of Christians. Precisely this was the issue of Fergus

---

portions of it would have been written at earlier dates. The same view is held by Hengel 1989, 81, who argues for a Trajanic date for the completion of a work begun under Nero.

[10] For this temple, see Price 1984, 252, and for 114 CE as the date of its founding, Friesen 1993, 58.

[11] See 13:4, 8; 13:11–18; 14:9–11; 15:2; 16:2, 13; 19:20; 20:4,10. It is possible that there are many other allusions to the imperial cult in Revelation, but other allusions are not so easily ascertained.

Millar's article of 1973. Millar was probably right in denying that the worship of the emperor was an important factor in the persecutions of Christians. Two passages in Revelation, however, demonstrate unmistakably that the author of this work did see a link between the execution of Christians and their refusal to worship the emperor (13:15; 20:4).[12] The first of these passages is about the so-called 'beast from the land,' that is, the entire system of institutions that organize and maintain the imperial cult in Asia.[13] This being is said to 'cause whoever did not worship the cult image of the (first) beast (that is, of the emperor) to be executed.'[14] In the other passage the author relates a vision which he says he has seen in heaven: 'I could see the souls of those who had been beheaded for the sake of God's word and their testimony to Jesus, those who had not worshipped the beast and its image (. . .)' (20:4).[15] Neither of these passages informs us about precisely *how* the charge against Christians and their execution, on the one hand, and their rejection of the veneration of the emperor, on the other hand, interrelated. On what formal charge Christians were brought before the Roman authorities and on what charge they were sentenced, we do not know with certainty. The evidence seems to suggest, however, that pagans brought Christians before the magistrates simply as Christians, on the supposition that their religion entailed asocial and immoral behaviour, atheism, and seditiousness. Pliny, as governor of Bithynia-Pontus, assumed indeed that avowed Christians *as such* deserved death,[16] and Trajan subscribed to this viewpoint.[17] The legal basis on which a governor like Pliny sentenced them to death was probably nothing but his mandate as *legatus Augusti*, which empowered him to do anything he might deem necessary to secure public order and peace.[18] It should be noticed that public order was not only at risk if certain people allowed themselves to take no part in the prescribed cults of the gods, but also if a governor withstood popular indignation against such people.[19] Once people had been brought before a Roman magistrate on the charge of being Christians, the magistrate could release them if they renounced their faith. In order to verify the trustworthiness of their apostasy, the magistrate could subject them to a simple test of loyalty to the gods and the emperor. To pass this test succesfully, the accused had to offer a modest sacrifice to the gods and the emperor. The sacrifice normally consisted of the burning of incense or the libation of wine in front of the statues or busts of some gods and the emperor. If a Christian refused to make the sacrifice, he or she could be convicted of belonging to a subversive or seditious group which was considered to be dangerous to the state. As Trajan wrote in his well-known rescript to Pliny: 'If people are accused [that is, as Christians] and convicted, they must be punished—yet on this condition, that whoever denies being a Christian, and makes the fact plain by his action, that is, by worshipping our gods, shall obtain pardon on his repentance.'[20] It may be concluded that the ground on which Christians were sentenced was that by being Christians they were members of a suspect, subversive group.

---

[12] Lietaert Peerbolte 1996, 120.

[13] I do not have the space here to give a detailed interpretation of chapter 13. Let it suffice for me to say that the 'beast from the sea' in 13:1–8, which is also called 'the first beast' (13:12), stands for the Roman empire. However, in v. 8 (αὐτόν, masculine), and perhaps also in v. 4, it represents the emperor who is religiously venerated. The 'beast from the land' in v. 13:11, which is also called the 'other beast' (13:11), represents the entire system of institutions that organize and maintain the imperial cult; for instance, the Council of the cities of Asia, the *Koinon*, and the priesthoods, provincial as well as municipal, in the imperial cult. In 13:14–18, though, the second beast is once again a caricature of the emperor. The imagery of the beasts in chapter 13 is rather inconsistent and ambiguous.

[14] Rev. 13:15: ποιήσῃ ἵνα ὅσοι ἐὰν μὴ προσκυνήσωσιν τῇ εἰκόνι τοῦ θηρίου, ἀποκτάνθωσιν.

[15] Rev. 20:4: εἶδον . . . τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν πεπελεκισμένων . . . οἵτινες οὐ προσεκῦνησαν τὸ θηρίον οὐδὲ τὴν εἰκόνα αὐτοῦ.

[16] Pliny, *Ep.* X 96.

[17] Pliny, *Ep.* X 97, quoted below.

Neither Pliny nor Trajan says that Christians were sentenced for refusing to participate in the public cult of the gods or in the worship of the emperor. The ground of the Christians' conviction was not this refusal, but the fact that, as Christians, they belonged to a potentially seditious association. Yet it is clear from Rev. 13:15 and 20:4 that the cult of the emperor—even if it was conceived by the pagans as part of the customary cult of the gods in general[21]—could, and sometimes did entail, the execution of Christians. This, then, is clearly one reason, and an understandable reason at that, why the author of Revelation was strongly opposed to the imperial cult.

---

[18] On the issue of the charge on which Christians were arrested and executed, see the discussion between Sherwin-White 1952 and 1964 and De Ste Croix 1963 and 1964.

[19] Art. Persecutions, early Christian, in *ODCC* 1997, 1257–1259, esp. 1258.

[20] Pliny, *Ep.* X 97.

[21] This explains, according to Millar 1973, why the imperial cult did not play an important role in the persecutions. The pagans blamed the Christians not especially for refusing to worship the emperor, but for refusing to worship the gods in general, among whom the emperor was only one.

Secondly, the author of Revelation directs his critique against the imperial cult also because he is worried about its widespread propagation and popularity and about the attraction it exerts on countless people all over the world. He complains that 'all on earth' worship it, that is, the beast representing the emperor (13:8). He has seen in a vision that 'the whole world went after the beast in wondering admiration' (13:3). Those who participate in the worship of the emperor are no fewer than 'the earth and its inhabitants' (13:11), 'everyone, great and small, rich and poor, slave and free' (13:16). There is of course much exaggeration in this depiction of the imperial cult, but the impression he gives of its popularity fully corresponds to what we know about the development of this cult from epigraphic, numismatic, and historiographic evidence. In no period within the three centuries between 50 BCE and 250 CE, were more temples, shrines, and sanctuaries built for the imperial cult in Asia Minor than in the first half of the second century.[22] During the Trajan era the imperial cult was the most widely propagated form of public religion in Asia Minor.[23] The Christian communities to which the Revelation of John was addressed were situated in cities of the province of Asia in which the imperial cult was particularly prominent. In fact, there were temples, priesthoods, ceremonies, and games for the emperor cult in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea, that is, in all seven cities to which the book of Revelation was sent.[24] Ephesus alone had at least five temples and shrines for the imperial cult before the end of the first century CE.[25] Pergamum had two famous temples for the imperial cult. In 29 BCE it was the first city of Asia to receive authorization from Octavian to establish a provincial cult and temple for Rome and the emperor. A cult and temple in honour of Zeus and Trajan were founded there in 114 CE.[26] Moreover, Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum and Sardis, along with Cyzicus, were the very cities where the native political organization—the *Koinon*, a provincial council composed of representatives from the cities of Asia—held its annual meetings in rotation.[27] The principal task of the *Koinon* was the organization of the cult of the emperor. The fact that these cities took turns as the residence of the *Koinon* was undoubtedly an extra menace to the Christians who lived there. In addition, periodical athletic festivals associated with the provincial cults of the emperor took place in the cities of Pergamum, Smyrna, Ephesus, Cyzicus, Philadelphia, Laodicea, Sardis and Tralles.[28] This resulted in an average of two provincial athletic competitions in Asia every year,[29] all of them accompanied by religious ceremonies.

---

[22] Price 1984, 59. In the discussion following the presentation of this paper, Dr. W.M. Jongman rightly pointed out that this statistical datum can not be taken as indisputable evidence of the importance of the imperial cult until it has been compared with the development of the contemporary building industry for other cults in Asia Minor. If there was a boom in temple building for other cults, or in the construction of stone buildings in general, the information mentioned rather reflects a flourishing of religion in general or a booming economy. It is true that a systematic comparison of the building activity for the imperial cult with that for other cults in the region is a desideratum, but there is little reason to suppose that the comparison will not turn out in favour of the imperial cult.

[23] Price 1984, 130; Mitchell 1993, 1, 113: 'No other cults had so widespread a distribution.'

[24] Price 1984, 250–265. For Thyatira, see Mitchell 1993, 1, 102. For Philadelphia, see ibidem, 1, 100.

Not only was the imperial cult immensely popular, it was also a great enticement for the people in the cities. It enjoyed the warm sympathy of the pagan population. This cult was not a duty which was imposed upon the people from higher up; for most people participation in it was certainly not an empty political gesture but the fulfilment of a real religious need. 'Emperor worship was not a political subterfuge, designed to elicit the loyalty of untutored provincials, but was one of the ways in which Romans themselves and provincials alongside them defined their own relationship with a new political phenomenon, an emperor whose powers and charisma were so transcendent that he appeared to them as both man and god.'[30] As a result, the wealthy occupants of the cities competed with each other to make financial contributions for the building of temples, the institution of priesthoods, and the organization of ceremonies and games. The cities competed with each other in order to obtain authorization to inaugurate a new cult for the emperor or for a member of the imperial family. By venerating the emperor and the imperial house, the cities—which did not play an official role in the political administrative system of the empire—tried to develop an access to the supreme centre of power. Via the cult of the emperor, the cities ritualized the relationship between themselves and the emperor, thus increasing their self-respect and their prestige. The city councils as well as the inhabitants of the cities, from the highest to the lowest, were glad to possess temples and ceremonies for the imperial cult, including the various contests, games, and spectacles affiliated with it.

---

[25] Price 1984, 254–255. On Ephesos as a centre of emperor cult, see Biguzzi 1998.

[26] Price 1984, 252; Friesen 1993, 58.

[27] Calder, Gray, Mitchell 1996, 190.

[28] Friesen 1993, 114.

[29] Friesen 1993, 115.

[30] Mitchell 1993, 1, 103.

It is not difficult to imagine that the population of the cities enjoyed attending the festivals and ceremonies connected with the imperial cult, participating in the sacrifices and especially the sacrificial meals, and attending the contests, games, spectacles, and fights of animals and gladiators. Even Christians may have been tempted to partake of meals or to watch the games in the imperial cult, and thus to engage in the cult itself. According to Revelation, the organizers of the imperial cult 'deceived the inhabitants of the earth' in order to make them erect an image in honour of the emperor (13:14). In Jewish apocalyptic tradition, 'deception' is a characteristic of several eschatological opponents of God;[31] in early Christian apocalyptic literature, 'deception' becomes a standard characteristic of the great, definitive, eschatological opponent of God.[32] In Rev. 13:14, the role of this eschatological opponent of God is cast upon the administrators of the imperial cult. This is why they are repeatedly called 'the false prophet' (16:13; 19:20; 20:10). The author says that this false prophet deceives people (19:20). In this way he places the imperial cult on a par with 'the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world.' Briefly, in the opinion of the author of Revelation, the popularity and attraction of the imperial cult is a danger to the Christians, and a reason why he abominates it wholeheartedly.

A third, and very important, reason why the author of Revelation abhors the imperial cult is its close connection with the power of Rome. In the author's view, the imperial cult and political administration were two aspects of one reality: the oppressive regime of Rome. How much repugnance he felt for Rome as a political power becomes clear from his chapters 17 and 18, where he depicts Rome as a harlot, clothed in purple and scarlet, mounted on a scarlet beast, and drunk with the blood of God's people and with the blood of those who, as Christians, had suffered martyrdom.

---

[31] See, e.g., *1 Henoch* 54:5–6: Azazel's hosts become servants of Satan and lead astray those who dwell on earth; cf. 56:4 'The days of their leading astray will no longer be counted', and 69:28: 'those who led astray the world will be destroyed.' Furthermore, 1QS III 20–24: the Angel of Darkness leads the righteous ones astray.

[32] *Oracula Sibyllina* III 68–69 (probably Christian): 'Beliar misleads people; he will also mislead many faithful and chosen Hebrews.' See also Mark 13:22; 2 Thess. 2:1–12; Rev. 12:9; *Didache* 16:4.

It is worth while noticing to what extent Revelation regards the Roman empire, on the one hand, and the imperial cult, on the other hand, as connected with each other or even as identical. In chapter 13, the author describes the beast from the sea, which he calls also 'the first beast'. This beast stands for Rome or the Roman empire. However, in the course of the description, Rome is designated as 'him' (αὐτόν, masculine), and as the object of religious veneration and adoration by all the inhabitants of the earth. The author is evidently unable to distinguish Rome and the imperial cult. Somewhat further down in the same chapter (13:11), he introduces the second beast, the one from the land, which stands for the system of institutions which are responsible for the imperial cult, such as the *Koinon* and the priesthoods, both provincial and municipal. The author says not only that the second beast exercises the authority of the first beast, that is Rome (13:12), but also that the name of the second beast is a *man's* name and that the numerical value of its letters is six hundred and sixty six (13:18). In 15:2, however, the name at issue is that of the *first* beast, that is, of an emperor as representative of Rome, not of the second beast (the imperial cult). Evidently, the author is unable to distinguish clearly between Rome and the imperial cult; occasionally, he can identify both with the emperor.[33]

Now according to Revelation, Rome received its power from the Dragon (13:2), that is, from Satan or the devil (12:9). Since the author regarded the imperial cult as a function of the Roman empire, and the two systems, political and religious, as two sides of the same coin, he abominated the imperial cult as much as he detested Rome and the Roman administration. Clearly, Revelation views the government and the imperial cult as one manifestation of Satanic oppression and influence. As Versnel argued, the pagans' estimation of the Christian religion was of course not much higher.

---

[33] In 19:20 and 20:10 the two beasts are thrown *together* in the lake of sulphur and fire.

At this point it should be recalled that during the first two decades of the second century CE, Christians still represented an extremely small minority of the population. Their membership was still a long way short of one percent of the population of the empire. In the years 110–115, there were probably only approximately 2 Christians per 1000 people.[34] It need not surprise us, therefore, that the author of Revelation, who belonged to this small minority, felt unable to identify with the ruling political system or with the religious system which sanctioned it. In his view, Roman rule and the imperial cult formed a demonic counterculture, just as Christianity formed a mythic counterculture in the view of certain Romans. The Christian world view of the author of Revelation formed a symbolic universe which was entirely incompatible with that of those who supported the worship of the emperor: these symbolic universes were mutually exclusive.

The three reasons mentioned so far for Revelation's radical rejection of the imperial cult can easily be deduced from the book itself. One further reason why Revelation is so fiercely opposed to the religious veneration of the emperor cannot immediately be deduced from the book, but it can safely be postulated on the ground of the particular nature of the imperial cult. I refer to the fact that this cult had a strongly public character.[35] It is true that many or most ancient religions were, at least to a certain extent, public religions. But this applied especially to the imperial cult, simply because the emperor was the summit of the administrative hierarchy that ruled the world. This was the reason why cities, in prescribing rules for the celebration of festivals of the imperial cult, often expected the involvement of the whole community. For instance, the arrangements for the Caesarea at Chios instructed all inhabitants to wear bright clothes.[36] What were Christians to do in that situation? For the celebration of festivals connected with the imperial cult, several cities passed decrees instructing all citizens whose houses were situated along the route of the procession, to sacrifice on altars outside their houses and even to provide their own altars.[37] What were Christians to do if their houses happened to be located along the route of the procession? About the middle of the second century, Antoninus Pius' birthday was celebrated at Ephesus with a distribution of money to each citizen from public funds to enable everybody to make sacrifices. What was a citizen to do who happened to be a Christian?[38]

---

[34] Stark 1996, 12–13.

[35] Indirect references to the public character of the imperial cult may nevertheless be found in some passages of Rev. 13 which intimate that everyone had to worship the emperor under penalty of death; see vv. 15–16, 12, and 8.

[36] *IGR* IV 947 and 948, with L. Robert 1933, 518–533, reprinted in idem 1969, 486–501.

[37] Price 1984, 112.

Thus it was precisely the public character of the imperial cult which made this religion a threat to Christians. For Christians it was often difficult to avoid participating in, or attending the public processions and sacrifices at issue without appearing to be disloyal towards the emperor and the other gods in whose honour these rituals took place. In the eyes of their compatriots, the Christians who refused to participate in these rituals, took advantage of the peace, the social stability, the benefits and the prosperity which the imperial government provided, but they were unwilling to pay the homage which was due to the emperor and the gods for providing these benefits. In the eyes of the pagans, the Christians' impious attitude toward the cult of the emperor and other gods might deprive the world of the protection these gods extended to the cities and the empire as a whole.[39] Accordingly, the persecution of the Christians was a response to their violation of concerns of Roman religion, piety, and the public weal. By its very nature, the imperial cult exposed the Christians more easily to the suspicion of impiety and irreverence towards the gods than any other cult.

Summarizing it may be said that the author of Revelation was opposed to the imperial cult for four reasons: firstly, because it entailed the execution of Christians; secondly, because it spread fast and obtrusively and exerted a strong attraction, also on Christians who happened to be less resolute in their conviction than the author; thirdly, because he viewed the imperial cult as interrelated with the oppressive political system of Rome, which he detested; and fourthly, because the imperial cult, by its public character, was more dangerous to the Christians than other pagan cults.

In conclusion I wish to return to Fergus Millar, mentioned at the beginning of this paper, or rather to the reaction to Millar's article given by Versnel.[40] According to Versnel, the imperial cult played a more important part in the persecutions of Christians than Millar had admitted. In Versnel's view, the persecutions were the result of a clash between two mutually exclusive utopias: on the one hand the golden age, the *aetas aurea* of the *Pax augustana*, on the other hand the *Regnum dei* inaugurated by Jesus and soon to become reality. According to Versnel, the Christians' refusal to participate in the worship of the emperor led the pagans to associate them with the mythic images of the reversed world of ἀνομία and chaos. In pagan eyes, the Christian rejection of the imperial cult amounted to the total negation of the normal Greco-Roman world view. Accordingly, the pagans categorized the Christians as belonging to a mythic counterculture of lawlessness and immorality. Hence, in Versnel's view, the well-known accusations of cannibalism, incest, and infanticide. This pagan assessment of the Christians as representatives of a world turned upside down, reinforced the processes which led to their persecution.

---

[38] Ibidem.

[39] Millar 1973, 164.

[40] Versnel 1988.

In Versnel's reassessment of the role the imperial cult played in the persecutions, he looked at the conflict at issue mainly from the pagan perspective. He argued that, since the pagans experienced the Christian rejection of the imperial cult as the repudiation of their whole value-system, they came to see the Christians as people belonging to another world and as representatives of a counterculture.

We can now conclude that the mechanism pointed out by Versnel also worked the other way around, at least in the case of Christians like the author of Revelation. Since these Christians experienced Roman culture, including the Roman political administration and the imperial cult, as the absolute negation of their own Christian value system, certain Christans came to see Rome and the imperial cult as belonging to another world than their own. For them, Rome and the imperial cult represented an alternative symbolic universe.[41] This assessment of Rome and the imperial cult induced the author of Revelation to depict these institutions as mythic monsters. In Rev. 13, Rome is the beast from the sea, whereas the institutions responsible for the imperial cult are the beast from the land. The mythic character of the imagery in this depiction of Rome and the imperial cult is unmistakable.[42] The message is equally unmistakable: Rome and the imperial cult do not belong in the author's symbolic universe.

---

[41] For a similar view, see Yarbro Collins 1986, 314–316.

[42] Yarbro Collins 1986, 314, who refers to Gunkel 1895.

But the author of Revelation did not content himself with disqualifying Rome and the imperial cult as monsters belonging to a mythic, alternative world. He went further. He took care to preface his chapter 13 on the two beasts with a chapter on the raging of the great Dragon, the devil (chapter 12). The timely introduction of the Dragon in chapter 12 makes it easy for the author to declare in chapter 13 that the first beast, Rome, derives its power, rule, and authority from the Dragon (13:2, 4), and that the second beast, the imperial cult, derives its authority from the first beast (13:11–12), that is, indirectly from the Dragon as well. In this way, with the help of his composition technique, the author of Revelation makes the imperial cult an instrument of the devil. The demonization of Rome and the imperial cult could not be made more explicit or more complete.

It should be observed, though, that Revelation's view of Rome was not the only one current among Christians in Asia Minor. Other Christians in this area, in precisely the same time and circumstances, could remain loyal to the emperor as God's servant, as appears from the so-called first letter of Peter (2:13–17). It should also be borne in mind that, when Revelation was written, in a city like Ephesus, which had a population of around 200,000 inhabitants, there were probably about 400 Christians.[43] Since house churches would normally comprise some 20 to 40 members, the Christians of Ephesus must have been scattered among more than ten communities. Given the house church setting of the early Christian communities, it was impossible for all Christians in a large city like Ephesus to gather in one place on a regular basis, even for the weekly supper. Hence diversity and friction could easily develop within a given locale; this happened for instance in Corinth (1 Cor. 1:10–13; 3:3–4; 2 Cor. 11:7–11) and in Galilee (Mark 9:38–40). Revelation itself shows that there were differing opinions and practices among Christians in Ephesus (2:4), Pergamum (2:14–15), Thyatira (2:20–24) and Sardes (3:1–4). Briefly, if there is every reason to suppose that there was much variation of opinion, both among and within the various Christian communities of a city like Ephesus, the anti-Roman stance of the author of Revelation need not be taken as representative of early Christianity in Ephesus, or in Asia, or in Anatolia, at the beginning of the second century CE.[44] On the contrary, 1 Peter 2:13–17, mentioned above, and 1 Tim. 2:2, possibly also written in Ephesus at the beginning of the second century,[45] show that when Revelation was written, other Christians in Asia Minor succeeded in coming to terms with Rome. That was indeed the more usual attitude of Christians towards Rome, at least in the first century CE, as appears from Paul (Rom. 13:1–7), Mark (12:17), and 1 Clement (61:1–2).

---

[43] Stark 1996, 12–13.

In Rev. 13, however, we witness the complete clash between two mutually exclusive, religious ideologies, that of the Christian author of Revelation and that of his pagan compatriots who were loyal to Rome and the emperor. Pagans felt that the Christian ideology undermined and subverted their world in a way that reminded them of the lawlessness and rebellion of primeval ages. Versnel rightly pointed out that the pagans' aversion for Christianity had a substratum in mythological reminiscences. Hence their mistrust and occasional outbursts of intolerance and intransigence towards Christianity. In their turn, however, certain Christians saw Rome and the imperial cult as a demonic puppet play directed by the devil. This was not the usual Christian assessment of Rome, but it did occur; and it is exemplified in Revelation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aune, D., *Revelation* (Word Biblical Commentary 52), 3 vols. (Dallas 1997, 1998, 1998).
Biguzzi, G., Ephesus, Its Artemision, Its Temple to the Flavian Emperors, and Idolatry in Revelation, *Novum Testamentum* (1998) 276–290.
den Boer, W., (ed.), *Le culte des souverains dans l'empire romain* (Entretiens de la Fondation Hardt 19, Vandoeuvres/Geneva 1973).
Calder, W.M., Gray, E.W., Mitchell, S., Asia, Roman Province, in: S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.), *Oxford Classical Dictonary* (Oxford ^{3}1993) 189–190.
De Ste Croix, G.E.M., Why Were the Early Christians Persecuted?, *P&P* 26 (1963) 6–38.

---

[44] Cf. P.A. Harland 2000, 101: '[The author of the Revelation of John] advocates a sectarian perspective, drawing sharp and exclusive boundaries around the Christian groups, especially when it comes to honouring the emperor and participating in imperial-related activities. Yet this is only one side of a conversation, for a significant number of the Christians in the cities of Asia, it seems, were more open towards participating in the aspects of the *polis*, including commonplace activities such as honours for the emperors and affiliations with fellow-workers in occupational associations.'

[45] Lohse 1991, 65: 'vermutlich in Ephesus'; Kümmel 1978, 341: 'Als Entstehungszeit [of 1 and 2 Tim.] ist daher der erste Anfang des 2. Jh. am ehesten anzunehmen.'

——, Why Were the Early Christians Persecuted?—A rejoinder, *P&P* 27 (1964) 28–33.

Friesen, S.J., *Twice Neokoros. Ephesus, Asia and the cult of the Flavian imperial family* (Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 116, Leiden 1993).

Garrow, A.J.P., *Revelation* (New Testament Readings, London 1997).

Gunkel, H., *Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit: eine religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung über Gen. 1 und Ap.Joh. 12* (Göttingen 1895).

Harland, P.A., Honouring the Emperor or Assailing the Beast: Participation in Civic Life among Associations (Jewish, Christian and Other) in Asia Minor and the Apocalypse of John, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 77 (2000) 99–121.

Hengel, M., *The Johannine Question* (London 1989).

Herzer, J., Der erste apokalyptische Reiter und der König der Könige, *NTS* 45 (1999) 230–249.

Kümmel, W.G., *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* ^{19}(Heidelberg 1978).

Lietaert Peerbolte, L.J., *The Antecedents of Antichrist. A traditio-historical study of the earliest Christian views on eschatological opponents* (Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 49, Leiden 1996).

Lohse, E., *Die Entstehung des Neuen Testaments* ^{5}(Stuttgart/Berlin/Cologne 1991).

Millar, F., The Imperial Cult and the Persecutions, in: Den Boer 1973, 145–165.

Mitchell, S., *Anatolia: land, men, and gods in Asia Minor*, I–II (Oxford 1993).

Moberly, R.B., When was Revelation Conceived?, *Biblica* 73 (1992) 376–393.

ODCC (*Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. Cross, F.L., and Livingstone, E.A., Oxford ^{3}1997).

Price, S.R.F., *Rituals and Power. The Roman imperial cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge 1984).

Robert, L., Sur des inscriptions de Chios, *BCH* 57 (1933) 505–543, esp. 518–533; reprinted in idem, *Opera minora selecta* 1 (Amsterdam 1969) 473–511, esp. 486–501.

Sherwin-White, A.N., The Early Persecutions and Roman Law Again, *JThSt* N.S. 3 (1952) 199–213.

——, An Amendment, *P&P* 27 (1964) 23–27.

Stark, R., *The Rise of Christianity: A sociologist reconsiders history* (Princeton 1996).

Versnel, H.S., Geef de keizer wat des keizers is en Gode wat Gods is. Een essay over een utopisch conflict, *Lampas* 21 (1988) 233–256.

Yarbro Collins, A., Vilification and Self-definition in the Book of Revelation, *HThR* 79 (1986) 308–320.

THE CULT OF APHRODITE PANDAMOS AND PONTIA ON COS[1]

Robert Parker

One reason why the work of Henk Versnel has long been to me a model and a source of delight is the peculiar success with which he has always combined study of the particular and of the general. He speaks of concrete, specific phenomena and speaks of them in all their specificity, but never of them alone; the theoretical issues in relation to which the specifics matter are never lost from his view, and indeed are always handled with a subtlety and nuance that are themselves an example. As a tribute to Henk Versnel I would ideally wish to offer a study that in the same way blends the particular with what is of broad theoretical interest. Half of my ideal I have achieved: I am undoubtedly about to speak of a specific phenomenon, a particular cult. The second half may prove harder to realise, but I can at least claim that the methodological issues that this particular cult raises are typical and important, whatever my success in handling them.

The cult of Aphrodite Pandamos and Pontia on Cos is known from two long inscriptions, both belonging to a class of which there are many other examples from Cos; they are documents authorised by the assembly which lay down the terms on which a priesthood is to be sold. One of these inscriptions, first published in 1993, apparently dates from shortly after 198 BC, since it contains a reference to damage caused by an earthquake which is doubtless the one of that year;[2] the second, which is on the point of publication,[3] should probably be dated on the basis of letter forms to the late second c. B.C. The two will be cited in what follows by the name of their discoverers, as the Segre and the Herzog text. The reason for which we have two texts regulating the sale of the priesthood in the same cult is that (like a modern job description) the terms and conditions were re-considered, and often re-published, each time that a priesthood was offered for sale; it is to this practice of re-publication when a vacancy arose that we owe the great abundance of surviving texts of this type.

---

[1] For comments from which I have learnt much I am very grateful to audiences in Uppsala, Victoria B.C. and London as well as in Leiden, and to participants in a graduate seminar in Oxford. I have also received excellent counsel from my Oxford colleagues John Day (Lady Margaret Hall) and Jane Lightfoot (All Souls College).

[2] Segre 1993, ED 178 (A): for the date see Habicht 1996, 88 and the prosopographic arguments of Höghammar 1997, 132 n. 35 and Dillon 1999, 77. For an English translation see the appendix to this article; Parker/Obbink 2000 contains a translation of the Herzog text.

[3] Parker/Obbink 2000, where a discussion of the genre of priesthood sale text

The inscriptions contain several references to two different cult epithets, Pandamos and Pontia, but it is clear from the second text in particular that, though there are two titles, there is only one priestess. Thus the situation is like that illustrated by a decree from Priene which lays down that the purchaser of the priesthood of Dionysos Phleos shall also serve Dionysos Katagogios (*LSA* 37.3–5). If one had to give primacy to one title among the two it should be Pandamos, since this is the one that appears in the more official contexts: in line 3 of the Segre text, where the task of a commission of the assembly to draw up a job description is mentioned, it is for the priesthood of Aphrodite Pandamos; in the Herzog text, though Pontia is the commoner title, it is specified in line 36 that the chief magistrates of the state are to sacrifice, in connection with the sale of the priesthood, to Aphrodite Pandamos. Formally this is perhaps a priesthood of Aphrodite Pandamos, with one of Aphrodite Pontia attached to it.

What, however, is more striking about the cult is the way in which the two titles are treated as a pair in parallel. The Italian excavations of the 1930s uncovered a remarkable Hellenistic building complex which is still visible on the seaward side of the agora of the town of Cos, very close to (and facing) the ancient waterfront.[4] (The sea has receded somewhat now.) A large rectangular portico closed to the outside contained within it an open space in which stood side by side a pair of identical temples, each of 14.5 by 9.5 metres. No formal proof was found of the identity of the precinct, but there is a high general probability that a large shrine right beside the sea in

---

may be found. I repeat here our thanks to the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften for the invitation to publish this and other Coan texts concerning cult which were discovered (this one in 1903) and transcribed by R. Herzog.

[4] The only publication is the preliminary report of Morricone 1950; see too Laurenzi 1959, 796 and Livadiotti/Rocco 1996, 112–116.

a port will belong to Aphrodite, and the Segre text confirms (b 1–5) that the Coan Aphrodision was close to the sea; a dedication to the goddess was in fact found near the excavated precinct.[5] At the date of the excavation the Segre and Herzog texts were already known, though still unpublished, and the obvious conclusion was immediately drawn[6] that the precinct with the twin temples housed our twin cult.

That conclusion surely remains irresistible, unprovable though it may be. It is also remarkable, and deserving of more attention than it has received. Simply in terms of the history of architecture, the Coan precinct is very unusual and rather spectacular. A pair of identical temples is a great rarity, and this pair set apart in a monumental precinct is perhaps unique.[7] Similarly there appears to be no parallel for a joint cult of quite this type uniting two aspects of the same deity. We need to try to be precise about what is unusual. Other instances can be found of one person being priest or priestess of a god or goddess under two titles; we have already, for instance, encountered the Tean priest of Dionysos Phleos who also served Dionysos Katagogios. And it is not unusual for a deity to be worshipped under several titles on a single site; the acropolis at Athens housed Athena Polias, Athena Nike, Athena Hygieia, and Athena Ergane. But the various cults of Athena on the acropolis seem, as it were, to have grown up separately and on a separate scale: Athena Polias had two large temples, Athena Nike a small temple, Athena Ergane and Hygieia probably just altars. What is unparalleled[8] is the way in which the two Coan cults, which may well have had separate origins and certainly expressed very different aspects of the goddess, were at a certain point brought together and put on a basis of strict equality with each other in the twin-templed precinct. Brought together and equalised, but not of course united: the temple of Pontia is identical to that of Pandamos, but still separate from it.

---

[5] Levi della Vida 1938, now also available as Segre 1993, EV 259.

[6] By Segre in Levi della Vida 1938, 147–8.

[7] Dr J.J. Coulton kindly comments: 'I certainly do not know any parallels in the Aegean area for twin temples in the Hellenistic period, and I think you are right that it is both unusual and spectacular. The upper terrace and temple at the Asklepieion at Kos is also an unusually coherent bit of Hellenistic sanctuary planning.' He adds that the twin temples of the 2nd c. AD at Corinth adduced by Ward Perkins (Boethius/Ward Perkins 1970, 372 with fig. 144) 'are not as precise a pair as the Kos ones, and are not in a common precinct'. For an earlier Roman parallel (the temples of Fortuna and Mater Matuta) see Pisani Sartorio 1995. Comparable in one regard is the small hellenistic temple of Aphrodite and Ares at Sta Lenika in Crete, a single building divided into two identical cellae (Bousquet 1938 and van Effenterre 1943). The twin archaic temples at Aliki in Thasos (Daux 1967, 84–7) have the same plan but differ in dimensions and date. The pairs of buildings (probably dining-rooms) within porticoes discussed by Hellström 1988, 111, are distinct.

[8] Pausanias reports that at Cnidus Aphrodite was honoured under a triad of names, as Doritis, Akraia and Euploia (1.1.3), and in a single sanctuary in Hermione

The problem that this observation raises in an acute form—or one such problem—is that of the character and unity of Greek divine figures. How can Aphrodite be both 'of all the people' and 'of the sea'? What, if anything, holds her together?

Aphrodite's association with the sea and with seafarers is one of her most widely diffused functions and finds expression in numerous epithets: not just Ποντία but also Εὔπλοια, Γαληναίη, Λιμενία and so on.[9] A temple of Aphrodite located on the water's edge was a feature of many Greek harbours. The Segre and Herzog texts present to us the clientèle of Aphrodite of the Sea in the form of persons who are required to make sacrifice or a payment to her at stated intervals:[10] the crew of warships, merchants, ship-owners and fishermen all emerge as particularly beholden to the goddess. In terms of modern western logic and symbolism, the association between a goddess of sexuality and the sea is far from self-evident. As so often, broadly two types of explanation have been proposed, one in terms of external factors that may have influenced the emergence of the goddess as we know her,[11] the other in terms of the internal logic of her divine personality.

---

under two titles, Pontia and Limenia (2.34.11); he speaks elsewhere of groups of statues depicting her under different aspects (6.25.1 (Elis); 8.32.2 (Megalopolis); 9.16.3–4 (Thebes): cf. Pirenne-Delforge 1994, 232, 265, 276). None of this is quite the same: at Cnidus there were presumably three distinct sanctuaries, there is no mention of twin temples at Hermione (and the two titles are in fact virtual synonyms), and a group of statues is not the same as a group of cults.

[9] See Graf 1985, 260–1; Pirenne-Delforge 1994, 433–7; Hordern-Purcell 2000, 438–445 and the works cited in n. 28 below. There is little Coan evidence aside from the Segre and Herzog texts. *NS* 475.12 attests a male priest]τας Ποντίας, very likely 'Αφροδί]τας, in the Roman period. Then too appears a (female) '*thiasos* of Aphrodite Εὐδίη', *NS* 495. *KFF* no. 217 (4th c.) remains a problem: Sophilos son of Zenodotos ΕΡΑΤΑΣ ('Ε(κ)άτας Herzog) Ποντίας τὸ ἱερὸν ἱδρύσατο. The Cnidian ineditum adduced by Miranda 1989, 142–3 to defend Erata as a goddess' name has now been published (*IKnidos* 103—verse of the Roman period) and proves irrelevant.

[10] Segre (a) 22–3; Herzog 5–7, 22–5.

[11] See e.g. Farnell 1896–1909, ii, 636; Herter 1960, 68; Nilsson 1967, 520–1; Burkert 1985, 153 with n. 10. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1931–2, I, 96 is strangely

Whatever the general merits or defects of explanations from outside or diffusionism, the perspective has a certain attraction in relation to sea-gods because the great channel of cultural diffusion in antiquity was the sea. The Eastern Mediterranean in the late Bronze age and early Iron ages is for many scholars a region of perpetual sea-borne exchange and interaction that constantly crosses ethnic boundaries; this is for instance Walter Burkert's Mediterranean, and the conception of the sea as a unifying and not a dividing element has received extraordinarily powerful expression of late in the remarkable study by Peregrine Hordern and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea*.[12] Another very striking inscription recently discovered in Cos should be mentioned here. In 1986 was published a Greek-Phoenician bilingual dedication made, as we learn from the Greek part, by one -timos son of Abdalonymos (king of Sidon in the period of the Successors of Alexander), to Aphrodite 'for the protection of those who sail' (ὑπὲρ τῶν πλεόντων). Below is a less legible Phoenician text, addressed to 'My lady Astarte' 'on behalf of the safety of [ ]'; Astarte was the main deity of Sidon, the home city of Abdalonymos' son. The find spot within Cos is unknown, but a predecessor to the sanctuary of our text must be an obvious candidate. Some 200 years later, a Greco-Nabatean bilingual dedication to Aphrodite was made which was found in the vicinity of the sanctuary.[13] In this context where Greeks and Phoenicians regularly sailed to each other's harbours one can readily imagine that a kind of koine of protecting deities might also have developed, so that wherever a seaman found himself he could address a recognisably similar deity with similar protecting powers.

Was Astarte then (the obvious first figure to compare) associated with the sea like Aphrodite? In actual Phoenico-Punic sources prior to the Hellenistic period[14] (admittedly these are far from abundant) the

---

casual: 'auch die Εὔπλοια, Ποντία u. dgl. kommt nicht aus dem Wesen der Göttin, sondern ergab sich dadurch, daß sie von außen kam, also in Hafenstädten zuerst Eingang fand, wozu dann ihre hesiodische Geburt sich bequem fügte'.

[12] Burkert 1992; Hordern/Purcell 2000.

[13] Abadalonymos: Kantzia/Sznycer 1980 = *SEG* xxxvi 758; for Astarte at Sidon see Lipiński 1995, 128–154. Greco-Nabatean: Levi della Vida 1938, now also available as Segre 1993, EV 259. Note too a further Nabatean inscription from Cos, not in this case associated with Aphrodite, of the first c. AD (Levi della Vida 1939), and also the *thiasos* of Zeus Soter and Asta[rt]e of *NS* 496 (Roman period?).

[14] See Lipiński 1995, 128–154 and Bonnet 1996. For the Old Testament evidence see in brief Day 1992.

only slightly relevant item is the sarcophagus of Eshmunʿazar (c. 500); this attests a temple of the goddess sited in 'Sidon land of the sea', which has been taken to indicate the coastal side of the city.[15] Astarte already appears in the second millennium in Egyptian, Ugaritic and other west Semitic texts. In the Ugaritic myth of the fight of Baʿal with the sea-god Yam, Astarte 'seems to be pleased by Baʿal's victory over Yam, and perhaps had a role in it', and in a very fragmentary Egyptian papyrus which apparently preserves a related myth she is unsuccessfully sent as an emissary of the gods to the rebellious sea.[16] It is conceivable that she owes this mythological role to a permanent relation with the sea in cult. But the only concrete indication that this might be so is a title 'of the sea' borne in Emar by a goddess, probably Astarte, who is indicated by the cuneiform symbol ^{d}Inanna or ^{d}Ištar. Even this title is only of twelve or so borne by the goddess in question—and may not even mean 'of the sea'.[17]

The case strengthens somewhat in the Hellenistic period, even if a new difficulty arises with the possibility that Astarte is borrowing from Aphrodite and not vice versa.[18] Most striking is an iconographic type which first appears on coins of Sidon in the reign of Antiochos VII Euergetes (138–129) and continues in the first century BC. The coins, normally inscribed in both Greek and Phoenician, show 'Astarte as city-goddess, holding a cruciform or triangular-headed standard, standing on a prow or whole galley';[19] a variant of the type re-appears on the coins of several quondam Phoenician cities in the second c. AD Even this image is less helpful for our purposes than it might seem. Sidonian coins, like those of the Phoenician cities in general, are dominated by naval motifs, and the representation of the city's chief goddess rampant in a ship is perhaps a visual translation of the idea of 'Sidon mighty at sea' rather than an illustration of a distinctive realm of activity of the goddess. But at the least it must show compatibility between Astarte and the naval sphere. A little 2nd c. BC (?) bronze statuette is unfortunately not available for inspection.[20] As described in 1883, it portrayed 'l'Astarté maritime sous les traits de l'Aphrodite hellénique, appuyée sur le sceptre de la mer'. Its handle, which survives separately, is inscribed in Phoenician 'For the Sidonians' and is decorated with a maritime motif, an entwining dolphin.

---

[15] Bonnet 1996, 32: the stele in English in e.g. Pritchard 1969, 662. The temple of Astarte at Kition stood on the acropolis above the harbour (Bonnet 1996, 72–4), but this does not prove a marine rather than e.g. a military function.

[16] Baʿal and Yam: Pritchard 1969, 129–131; Driver 1956, 12–14, 76–83; Caquot-Sznycer 1974, 121–139; the citation is from Caquot-Sznycer 1974, 92, and represents a much more limited conclusion than that drawn e.g. by Dussaud 1947. Papyrus (commonly known as 'Astarte and the Tribute of the Sea'): Pritchard 1969, 17–18, with Kaiser 1962, 81–91; Stadelmann 1967, 125–130; Helck 1983.

[17] See Bonnet 1996, 139, and for the uncertainty of the translation Lipiński 1995, 131 n. 40; on Emar see in brief Kuhrt 1995, I, 314–7.

[18] 'L'assimilation à Aphrodite Pontia est significative d'un certain infléchissement des attributions des dieux phéniciens dans la diaspora' (Bonnet 1996, 87). Baslez 1986, 301 also sees Astarte's marine role as chronologically secondary (that of sovereignty being prior).

[19] Hill 1910, cviii, on his pp. 163–4 nos. 128–136 (plate xxii 7–10) and (the earliest instances) Rouvier 1902, 128 nos. 1262–3. Variant: Delcor 1986, nos. 11–12, cf. 13, 27, and p. 1084. Studies of Astarte commonly cite only this evidence from the Roman imperial period for the type.

Then there is the evidence of Phoenician dedications to 'Aphrodite'. The Coan bilingual mentioned earlier is one of several dedications addressed to Aphrodite by certain or plausible Phoenicians in a marine context; in two this Aphrodite of the sea is explicitly associated with Astarte.[21] Astarte differed from Aphrodite too much—her association with sovereignty, for instance, rather evoked Hera—for it to be possible for Phoenicians to identify the two figures tout court;[22] but their shared concern with the sea may have been one of the points of contact. In Achilles Tatius, 'the god of the Phoenicians whom the Sidonians call Astarte' is natural recipient for a thank offering for rescue from a storm (1.2).[23]

An earlier indication should also be mentioned which, though indirect, is perhaps the strongest of all. In 384/3 BC. Dionysius of Syracuse sacked a great temple in the port (modern Pyrgi) of Etruscan Caere; the temple is said to have been sacred to Eileithyia (Strabo) or Leucothea (Pseudo-Aristotle, Polyaenus, Aelian).[24] Gold tablets of the early 5th century discovered at the site in 1964 included one in Phoenician/Punic which told 'Lady Astarte' of the various gifts, including a temple, that Thefarie Velianas the king of Caere had made to her;[25] and it is generally agreed that, along with the Etruscan goddess Uni also there attested, she was the main deity of the precinct. Thus the identification of Astarte with a specifically marine goddess, Leucothea, seems already to be attested for the fourth century (Pseudo-Aristotle, and the probable source of Polyaenus).[26]

---

[20] Bordreuil in Bordreuil/Gubel 1988, 443–4, III.5.

[21] See *ID* 2132, a dedication by one Andromachos son of Phanomachos (nationality?) to Isis Soteira-Astarte-Aphrodite Euploia Epekoos and Eros-Harpocrates-Apollo; *IG* II^2 3425, a dedication to Aphrodite Euploia in the Piraeus by the Sidonian admiral Philocles; *ID* 2305, a dedication to Zeus Ourios (of fair winds) and Astarte Palaistine Aphrodite Ourania by Damon of Askalon for rescue from pirates; n. 13 above. Cf. especially Baslez 1986; also Baslez 1977, 81.

[22] See Baslez 1986, 301–2.

[23] 'Paphian Aphrodite' too on Cyprus has often quoted associations with the sea (Polycharmos of Naucratis in Athenaeus 675f–676c; Tacitus. *Hist.* 2.3–4; Bonnet 1996, 79), but is more Greek than Phoenician in the view of Bonnet 1996, 81.

[24] Strabo 5.2.8 (226); (Pseudo)-Aristotle, *Oec.* 1349b 34; Polyaenus, *Strat.* 5.2.21; Aelian, *VH* 1.20; unidentified in Diodorus, 15.14.3–4.

Not without difficulty, then, a case for the marine role of Astarte can be made. But evidently we are very far from having found any strong reason to suppose that Aphrodite owes anything to it.[27] It is Aphrodite, not Astarte, whose relation to the sea is firmly embedded in early myth (if we accept it to be implied in the myth of her birth from the sea-foam).[28] In Ugaritic texts not Astarte but a different goddess, Athirat, is regularly described as 'mistress of the sea' and is sometimes associated with a 'fisherman of Athirat';[29] one text helpfully provides a location of her cult by mentioning a 'sanctuary of Athirat of the Tyrians, goddess of the Sidonians'. Should we then try the argument again with Athirat substituted for Astarte?[30] Some influence in very early time can doubtless not be excluded (nor, of course, established). But in the first millennium in Phoenicia this mistress of the sea simply slips from view. Probably she lives on in the Asherah of the Old Testament, but no association with the sea is there visible.[31]

We can leave aside Isis, great protectress of seafarers though she became, because it was, it seems, only in the Greco-Roman period that she acquired this function.[32] I turn instead to the non-diffusionist approach, the one that seeks to explain Aphrodite's association with the sea in terms of the internal logic of the goddess' own powers. The central idea here is expressed with an unmatched charm by Lucretius in the hymn to Venus which opens *De Rerum Natura*.[33]

---

[25] See Bonnet 1996, 120–125 and e.g. the references given in Ridgway 1996.

[26] For much later evidence of this identification see Bonnet 1996, 41–2.

[27] Very extreme is the view of Dugand 1974 that Aphrodite's name actually derives from Astarte's.

[28] On this matter contrast Miranda 1989, who wishes to downdate Aphrodite's association with the sea, and Pugliese Carratelli 1992. The prominence and popularity of the archaic Aphrodision in the trading centre of Naucratis (Bernand 1970, 676–742) works against Miranda's position.

[29] See e.g. Caquot-Sznycer 1974, 68–73, who note that neither myth nor ritual make plain what her relation to the sea may have been.

[30] Cf. Friedrich 1978, 80–81.

[31] For bibliography see Wyatt 1999; note especially Day 1986. Lipiński 1995, 224–6, still tries to dissociate Athirat and Asherah.

[32] Koch 1993, 596; Merkelbach 1995, 66–7.

> *Aeneadum genetrix, hominum divumque voluptas*
> *alma Venus . . .*
> *te, dea, te fugiunt venti, te nubila caeli*
> *adventumque tuum, tibi suavis daedala tellus*
> *summittit flores, tibi rident aequora ponti*
> *placatumque nitet diffuso lumine caelum.*

> Mother of the descendants of Aeneas, pleasure of men and of gods, life-giving Venus . . . from you, goddess, and your arrival flee winds and the clouds of the sky, earth the artist puts forth her scented flowers for you, for you the smooth surface of the sea smiles and the sky is calmed and gleams with spreading light.

Put more prosaically, Aphrodite's power over the sea is simply a particular application of her general power to calm and assuage; just as she dissolves hatred among men, so she can calm storms in the natural world. And this capacity to act in a similar way in spheres that we would regard as distinct is, it can be added, characteristic of Greek gods.[34] In her valuable recent monograph on Aphrodite Vinciane Pirenne-Delforge introduces an element of structuralist opposition. Both Poseidon and Aphrodite are gods of the sea, but their relation to the element is an opposite one; the one, an embodiment of brute primal force, is a creator of storms, the other by her gentle charm brings them to an end.[35]

This is, as far as it goes, very convincing. One can scarcely doubt that it was in just these terms that Greeks explained to themselves Aphrodite's relation with the sea; and the crucial claim that, in contrast to Poseidon, Aphrodite calms storms but does not cause them appears to be correct. Yet complications need to be recognised at the theoretical level. The normal rule of Greek polytheism, or so we are told, is that the god who sends a particular evil is also the god who can provide release from it. In a different sphere Poseidon himself provides perhaps the best single illustration of the principle: he is both the god who sends earthquakes and the god to whom one prays for protection from them. And in fact Poseidon can bring storms to an end as well as cause them; he can even, like Aphrodite, grant 'a fair voyage' (εὔπλοια).[36] What need then of Aphrodite to do a job which, according to the traditional rules of Greek polytheism, Poseidon himself could have performed, and in some cases did? The structuralist account explains and explains well how it was possible to envisage Aphrodite as an aid against the perils of the sea, but not why it was necessary or desirable to do so. And the redundancy does not stop with Aphrodite, since there were many further saving powers for sailors.[37] The question thus arises why polytheism dealt with some areas of life so economically—for one job one god—and with others such as seafaring so wastefully.[38] Doubtless seafaring encouraged diversification just because it was such a central and such a perilous aspect of ancient life. And, where there was a market for protecting powers, processes of diffusion and cultural borrowing might well have taken place. But these huge questions cannot be pursued further here.

---

[33] It is quoted in this context by Otto 1955, 93.
[34] Vernant 1974, 105 = Vernant 1980, 94.
[35] Pirenne-Delforge 1994, 434–7.

I turn back instead to the second epithet born by Aphrodite in the Coan cult, Pandamos. In its Attic form Pandemos this epithet of Aphrodite is very well known because of the presentation of it in Plato's *Symposium*. The Coan cult can now claim to be the best attested after that of Athens. (Third is that of Erythrae, the foundation decree of which was recently discovered, in sadly fragmentary state.)[39] There is widespread agreement nowadays that, despite what Plato pretends, the cult had nothing to do with a vulgar form of love as opposed to a spiritual: it was rather a cult of Aphrodite of 'all the people', a cult of inclusiveness and political unity. It was thus a particular application of the more general political role of Aphrodite in creating harmony and goodwill between citizens, the role expressed for instance in the very frequent association between Aphrodite and magistrates.[40] But though the understanding of the epithet Pandamos as broadly political is generally accepted, the concrete implications of this have hitherto been unknown. How 'the whole people' participated in the cult of Aphrodite of All the People in Athens is not attested. Here the Coan evidence allows some progress to be made. The Segre text contains the prescription (26–31): 'Let the collections of the σαλαίδες [meaning unknown] and the other matters concerning them all be performed in accord with what was ratified in the monarchy of Leukippos. From the collections let each of the authorities (τῶν προεστακότων) sacrifice a full-grown victim to Aphrodite Pandamos on the ninth of the month Panamos.' With this new regulation are evidently to be associated two already known: a calendar from the deme Isthmos, in the far west of the island, lists for a day somewhere between the first and the tenth of Panamos: 'for Aphrodite Pandamos a [ ] kid, to be sacrificed by the priest/priestess [of X]'; and a fragmentary text from Halasarna on the central south coast which lists sacrifices probably all to be made to Aphrodite begins 'Let the priest of Apollo [sacrifice] in the month Panamos on the seventh a goat costing 20 drachmai to Aphrodite and on the ninth of the same month a goat costing the same and [four] σαλαίδια'.[41] Date, recipient and (in two cases) reference to the mysterious σαλαιδ-[42] are the same in each text. Is not this devotion practised on the same day at different sites throughout the island a concrete illustration of the ideal of a cult uniting 'all the people'? For priestesses and temples too of Aphrodite (though not necessarily of Aphrodite Pandemos) there is evidence in the Coan demes.[43]

---

[36] Homerus *Il.* 9. 362; cf. e.g. the *Homeric Hymn* to him (no. 22), with the notes of Allen/Halliday/Sikes 1936, and, on the frequent juxtaposition, though not combination, of temples of Poseidon and Aphrodite, Pirenne-Delforge 1994, 435.

[37] See Wachsmuth 1967, 476–9.

[38] It may be objected to my comparison between different powers of Poseidon that earthquakes and storms are not wholly analogous in human terms: the one has an opposite (a calm sea, a good voyage) which can appropriately be represented by a deity, whereas we do not wish one another 'an unshaken earth'. That difference is surely relevant, but it remains true that Poseidon shared Aphrodite's power of ensuring calm and a successful voyage.

[39] Erythrae: *SEG* xxxvi 1039, with the comment of *Bull. Épig.* 1988 no. 396. Pandemos is the only epithet to appear among the very numerous dedications from the Aphrodision at Naucratis, most of which are simply addressed to 'Aphrodite' (Bernand 1970, 676–742, nos. 467, 476, 577). There are also dedications to her from Paros (*IG* XII.5. 221: 3rd c. BC) and Amantia in Epirus (*SEG* I 265: 1st c. AD). I know no other firm evidence. Statues said, in Pausanias' time, to depict Aphrodite Pandemos are scarcely proof of a cult title.

---

[40] See *Bull. Épig.* 1959 no. 325; Graf 1985, 263–4. Segre 1993, EV 2, a dedication by the *monarchos* Theukles (c. 200) and the ten *hieropoioi* to 'Aphrodite and Homonoia' (cf. Thériault 1996, 38–9, 69–70), is a good Coan illustration of the civic aspect of Aphrodite's cult: was it made in our shrine? On the Platonic misrepresentation see Pirenne-Delforge 1988.

[41] *LSCG* 169 A 12–1; 172. 1–4.

[42] On them see Dubois 1997, no. 187: he compares Hesychius σαλαίς· κωκυτός and Anacreon 484 Page, σαλαίζειν = θρηνεῖν.

[43] *LSCG* 172 (Halasarna) is probably part of a 'sale of priesthood' text; if so, the

First and foremost then Aphrodite Pandamos brings together all citizens, who all honour her on the same day. What about non-citizens? The Segre inscription (a 15–20) requires all women who marry on Cos—citizen women, illegitimate women and metics—to make sacrifice to the goddess within a year; the back of that stone bears a list of donations made to the cult of Aphrodite by women of all categories. The Herzog inscription (25–27) requires people undergoing manumission to make a cash offering to the goddess. Ritual inclusiveness was far from being a self-evidence on Cos; on the contrary the island provides, in the list of persons entitled to worship Apollo and Heracles at Halasarna, some of our most striking evidence for a cult not only not open to all inhabitants but not even open to all the citizen members of a given vicinity (PH 367–368). It would be rash to make any firm assertion here: the Coans' willingness to seek and even demand financial support for the cult of Aphrodite from all classes need not have anything to do with particular values associated with the goddess; conversely, in other hellenistic cities we find metics invited to participate in cults which are not especially associated with political unity.[44] But it is conceivable that Aphrodite Pandamos was seen as embodiment of a broad ideal which sought, in Aristophanes' metaphor,[45] ξαίνειν εἴς καλαθίσκον κοινὴν εὔνοιαν ἅπαντας/καταμιγνύντας τούς τε μετοίκους κἔι τις ξένος φίλος ὑμῖν, 'to card shared goodwill into a basket, mixing in everybody, both metics and friendly foreigners'.

Clearer, however, is the association of Aphrodite Pandamos with unification of the citizen body. Her epithet on Cos derives, it has been suggested, from the synoecism of 366/5, the synoecism which created an entity described as 'the whole people' (σύμπας δᾶμος) in opposition to its constituent parts, the individual demes.[46] Unification

---

priesthood will be of Aphrodite, recipient of the offerings listed. PH 387 from Antimachia (at no great distance from Halasarna) is a list of 42 male contributors to 'construction of the Aphrodision' (though it is possible that this is the central Aphrodision of Cos town). Also from Halasarna is the fine dedication to Aphrodite Epekoos by a λοχαγός and his συνφύλακες, *NS* 675. One wonders whether Aphrodite Pandamos was also introduced to Kalymnos after its incorporation in the Coan state: no trace remains.

[44] For a recent example see Blümel 1997, 155 line 18, a decree of Bargylia in which it is determined that metics too shall engage in βουτροφία for Artemis Kindyas ἵνα καὶ οὗτοι μετέχωσιν τῶν παρὰ τῆς θεᾶς [εὐεργεσίων ?].

[45] *Lysistr.* 579–80.

[46] So Sokolowski 1969, 301. On σύμπας δᾶμος or ὁ πᾶς δᾶμος in Coan decrees =

inevitably entailed a revision of the entire existing religious calendar, and the extensive 4th century calendar texts that survive from Cos are generally taken to be witnesses to the process.[47] Little, unfortunately, is known in detail about the Coan synoecism. The main source is Diodorus (15.76.2):

> At the same time as this was being done the Coans transferred to the city which they now inhabit and built it up on a large scale. A considerable number of men were brought together in it, and expensive walls and an important harbour were built. It has continuously grown from then on both in public revenue and private wealth, and has become in fact comparable to the greatest cities.

This was then a physical as well as a political synoecism, though existing settlements on the island were not abandoned but left to function as demes within the unified state. The pattern we have observed whereby Aphrodite Pandamos was worshipped, at the same time, both centrally and in the demes sits well with these political arrangements. Strabo tantalisingly notes (14.2.19, 657) that the synoecism was occasioned by *stasis*. There would evidently have been a role for the goddess of civic harmony in these circumstances. And Diodorus' emphasis on the role of the harbour in the life of the new city is very suggestive in relation to the joint cult. Were the Aphrodites Pandamos and Pontia brought together as standard-bearers of a new unified Cos that was to turn its face towards the sea? That attractive and credible claim unfortunately well outruns the evidence. The joint cult is first attested by the Segre text of shortly after 198, and the surviving remains were dated to the early second century by the excavator.[48] As to the relation of the two cults before this, all is speculation.

---

the people as a whole (in contrast to the demes) see Sherwin-White 1978, 182 n. 39. On the synoecism see Sherwin-White 1978, 63–72 and Hornblower 1982, 83–4, 103–4.

[47] *LSCG* 151: cf. Sherwin-White 1978, 292–3, who adduces the calendar from Myconos which is explicitly a product of synoecism (*LSCG* 96).

[48] Probably the precinct should be updated somewhat, now that a quite elaborate sanctuary is attested by the Segre decree, but still only (I assume) to the late 3rd century. I list here the few scraps of evidence for the cult of Aphrodite on Cos from before the Segre text: *SEG* xxxvi 758, the dedication by the son of Abdalonymos, mentioned in the text; Pliny, *NH* 36.20, the robed statue bought from Praxiteles (preferred by the austere Coans to the statue they had originally commissioned, the stunning nude that was bought by their neighbours and became Cnidian Aphrodite); Strabo 14.2.19, 657, Apelles' painting of Aphrodite Anadyomene, originally displayed in the Asclepieum; *LSCG* 169 A 12 (assigned by Herzog to the early third c.), sacrifice to Aphrodite Pandamos in the deme Isthmos; *LSCG* 154 A 17 (mid

So much for the two titles of Aphrodite as they appear on Cos. I conclude with a brief final observation about the greater and broader power who lies behind the epithets and is only partially evoked through them. Like many other Coan texts relating to priesthoods, both the Segre and the Herzog inscription require particular categories of individuals regularly to make sacrifice or bring cash offerings to particular gods, in their case Aphrodite. Only some of the classes of persons so constrained in these texts have a special connection with the goddess as either Pontia or Pandamos. Merchants, shipowners, fishermen and so on have an obvious connection with Aphrodite of the Sea, and as we have seen it is possible, though much less certain, that persons undergoing manumission and non-citizen women have special ties with Aphrodite Pandamos. But offerings are also required in the Segre text simply from all women whose marriage has been registered in the previous year (a 15–26).[49] Here we have left the sea and politics and are back in the most familiar area of Aphrodite's activities, the sphere of relations between the sexes; Aphrodite remains the goddess of sexuality even though the two epithets that the goddess bears in this particular cult point to different concerns. When attempting to explain to students the breadth of Aphrodite's interests and powers I sometimes urge them to try to forget about sex for a moment. They find it hard to do so, and perhaps after all they are in the right.

Appendix: English translation of Segre 1993, ED 178 (A)

(a) With good luck. When Theudoros was *monarchos*, on the 16th of the month Dalios, the following was submitted by the men chosen to draw up conditions concerning the priesthood of Aphrodite Pandamos, Kleinias son of Philitas, Kleumachos son of Phanomachos, Damophon son of Menon.

(5) Let the public sellers sell the priesthood in the month Alseios at the elections. Let the woman who buys it be healthy and whole and adult, and let her serve as priestess for life. Other matters as in the previous contracts. She shall pay four part-payments of the sum realised (*by the sale*),

---

3rd c.), laws concerning priesthoods (of Aphrodite?) to be displayed in the Aphrodision (ours, or a predecessor?).

[49] Cf. Dillon 1999.

(10) the first in the month Alseios in the year of Theudoros, the second in the month Gerastios after the monarchy of Theudoros, the third in the month Alseios under the same *monarchos*, the fourth in the month Gerastios under whatever *monarchos* is next but one after Theudoros.

(15) In order that the honours of the goddess may be increased, and all women who get married among citizen women and bastards and metics may be seen honouring the goddess in accord with their capacity, let as many women as get married, once the oath has been registered (*obscure*: χρηματισθείσας εἰσωμοσίας), all sacrifice a victim to the goddess within a year after the marriage.

(20) For those women who carry out what has been decreed may things go better. Similarly, and in accord with what has been ratified previously, traders and ship-owners who sail from the city shall accomplish the sacrifices. As for all those who do not sacrifice as has been decreed, let a fine be imposed on them

(25) and let them owe the priestess as a fine 10 drachmai, and let her have the power to exact payment as if in fulfilment of a legal verdict. Let the collections of the *salaides* and the other matters concerning them all be performed in accord with what was previously ratified when Leukippos was *monarchos*. From the collections let each of the authorities sacrifice a full-grown victim to Aphrodite Pandamos on the ninth of the month Panamos.

(31) And since because of the earthquake that has occurred some have fallen down . . . of the dining-rooms . . . and the other service buildings . . . there is a danger . . .

(b) of Aphrodite Pontia the (something) between . . . the Herakleion and the places of mooring which have been fitted with gates, leaving access

(5) from the ship building yards. As for the expense that will be incurred for the construction work to create a passage through them (*feminine*), {but when the account has been processed}[50] let them pay it to the supervisors appointed for the work from the first payment (*made by the priestess*) until the architect renders an account. In order that in future too

---

[50] The bracketed phrase seems misplaced here.

(10) the shrine of Aphrodite Pandamos and Pontia may undergo maintenance through the provision of a fund for their repair, let the *thesauroi* be opened each year by the *prostatai* and the priestess in the month Dalios.

(15) Let half of the money taken out belong to the priestess and half to the goddess. Let the *prostatai* take to the treasurers and keep . . . (*text uncertain*) a private account of the goddess for repair of the things in the shrine. And let not anyone be permitted

(20) [to use that money for any other purpose] . . .

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allen, T.W., Halliday, R., Sikes, E.E., *The Homeric Hymns* (Oxford ^{2}1936).

Baslez, M.-F., *Recherches sur les conditions de pénétration et de diffusion des religions orientales à Délos* (Paris 1977).

——, Cultes et dévotions des Phéniciens en Grèce: les divinités marines, in: Bonnet, C., Lipiński, E., Marchetti, P. (eds.), *Studia Phoenicia IV, Religio Phoenicia* (Namur 1986) 289–306.

Bernand, A., *Le delta égyptien d'après les textes grecs*, I (iii) (Cairo 1970).

Blümel, W., Ein weiteres Fragment des Kultgesetzes aus Bargylia, *Epigraphica Anatolica* 28 (1997) 153–6 SEG XLVII 1560.

Boethius, A. and Ward Perkins, J.B., *Etruscan and Roman Architecture* (Harmondsworth 1970).

Bonnet, C., *Astarté: dossier documentaire et perspectives historiques* (Rome 1996).

Bordreuil, P. and Gubel, E., Bulletin d'antiquités archéologiques du Levant inédites ou méconnues. V, *Syria* 65 (1988) 437–456.

Bousquet, J., Le temple d'Aphrodite et d'Arès à Sta Lenika, *BCH* 62 (1938) 386–408.

Burkert, W., *Greek Religion*, tr. Raffan, J. (Oxford 1985).

——, *The Orientalizing Revolution*, tr. Pinder, M.E. and Burkert, W. (Cambridge, Mass. 1992).

Caquot, A. and Sznycer, M., *Textes ougaritiques, II, Mythes et légendes* (Paris 1974).

Daux, G., *Guide de Thasos* (Paris 1967).

Day, J., Asherah in the Hebrew Bible and Northwest Semitic Literature, *Journal of Biblical Studies* 105 (1986) 385–408.

——, 'Ashtoreth', in: Freedman, D.N. (ed.), *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, I (New York 1992) 491–4.

Delcor, M., 'Astarte', in: *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* III.I (1986) 1077–1085.

Dillon, M.P.E., Post-nuptial Sacrifices on Kos (Segre, ED 178) and Ancient Greek Marriage Rites, *ZPE* 124 (1999) 63–80.

Driver, G.R., *Canaanite Myths and Legends* (Edinburgh 1956).

Dubois, L., Mots nouveaux et mots rares, in: Bulletin Épigraphique, *REG* 110 (1997) 511–3.

Dugand, J.E., Aphrodite-Astarté (de l'étymologie du nom d'Aphrodite), *Hommages à Pierre Fargues* (Paris 1974) 73–98.

Dussaud, R., Astarté, Pontos et Baʿal, *CRAI* (1947) 201–224.

Effenterre, H. van, Documents édilitaires de Lato, *REA* 45 (1943) 27–39.

Farnell, L.R., *Cults of the Greek States*, 5 vols. (Oxford 1896–1909).

Friedrich, P., *The Meaning of Aphrodite* (Chicago 1978).

Graf, F., *Nordionische Kulte* (Rome 1985).

Habicht, C., Neue Inschriften aus Kos, *ZPE* 112 (1996) 83–94.

Helck, W., Zur Herkunft der Erzählung des sogenannten "Astarte Papyrus", in: Görg, M. (ed.), *Fontes atque Pontes. Festschrift H. Brunner* (Wiesbaden 1983) 215–223.

Hellström, P., The Planned Function of the Mnesiklean Propylaia, *Op. Ath.* 17 (1988) 107–121.

Herter, H., Die Ursprünge des Aphroditenkultes, in: *Éléments orientaux dans la religion grecque ancienne* (Paris 1960) 61–76.

Hill, G.F., *A Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Phoenicia* (London 1910).

Höghammar, K., Women in Public Space: Cos c. 200 BC to c. AD 1520, in: I. Jenkins and G.B. Waywell, *Sculpture of Caria and the Dodecanese* (London 1997) 127–133.

Hordern, P. and Purcell, N., *The Corrupting Sea* (Oxford 2000).

Hornblower, S., *Mausolus* (Oxford 1982).

Kantzia, C. and Sznycer, M., Μια δίγλωσση ελληνική-φοινικική επιγραφή απή την Κω, *AD* 35 (Mel. 1980) 1–30.

KFF = Herzog, R., *Koische Forschungen und Funde* (Leipzig 1899).

Kaiser, O., *Die mythische Bedeutung des Meeres in Ägypten, Ugarit und Israel* (Berlin 1962).

Koch, K., *Geschichte der ägyptischen Religion* (Stuttgart 1993).

Kuhrt, A., *The Ancient Near East*, 2 vols. (London 1995).

Levi della Vida, G. (with a note by Segre, M.), Una bilingue greco-nabatea a Coo, *Clara Rhodos* 9 (1938) 137–148.

——, Une bilingue gréco-palmyrénienne à Cos, in: *Mélanges R. Dussaud*, ii (Paris 1939) 883–6.

Laurenzi, L., Coo, in: *Enciclopedia dell' arte antica*, II (Rome 1959) 795–800.

Lipiński, E., *Dieux et déesses de l'univers phénicien* (Leuven 1995).

Livadiotti, M. and Rocco, G. (eds.), *La presenza italiana nel Dodecaneso tra il 1912 e il 1948* (Catania 1996).

LSA: see Sokolowski 1955.

LSCG: see Sokolowski 1969.

Merkelbach, R., *Isis regina-Zeus Sarapis* (Stuttgart and Leipzig 1995).

Miranda, E., Osservazioni sul culto d'Euploia, *Miscellanea greca et romana* 14 (1989) 123–144.

Morricone, L., Scavi e richerche a Coo (1935–1943): relazione preliminare, *Bollettino d'Arte* 35 (1950) 54–73.

Nilsson, M.P., *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, I (Munich ³1969).

NS = Maiuri, A., *Nuova silloge epigrafica di Rodo e Cos* (Florence 1925).

PH = Paton, W.R. and Hicks, E.L., *The Inscriptions of Cos* (Oxford 1891).

Otto, W.F., *The Homeric Gods*, tr. Hadas, M. (London 1955).

Parker, R. and Obbink, D., Aus der Arbeit der "Inscriptiones Graecae" VI. Sales of Priesthoods on Cos I, *Chiron* 30 (2000) 415–447.

Pirenne-Delforge, V., Épithètes cultuelles et interprétation philosophique. À propos d'Aphrodite Ourania et Pandémos à Athènes, *AC* 57 (1988) 142–157.

——, *L'Aphrodite grecque* (Athens-Liège 1994).

Pisani Sartorio, G., Fortuna et Mater Matuta, Aedes, in: Steinby, E.M., *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae*, ii, D-G (Rome 1995) 281–5.

Pritchard, J.B., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton ³1969).

Pugliese Carratelli, G., Sul culto di Afrodite Euploia in Napoli, *Parola del Passato* 47 (1992) 58–61.

Ridgway, D., Pyrgi, in: S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Oxford ³1996) 1282.

Rouvier, J., Numismatique des villes de la Phénicie: Sidon, *Journal international d'archéologie numismatique* 5 (1902) 99–134.

Segre, M., *Iscrizioni di Cos* (Rome 1993).

Sherwin-White, S., *Ancient Cos* (Göttingen 1978).

Sokolowski, F., *Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure* (Paris 1955).
——, *Lois sacrées des cités grecques* (Paris 1969).
Stadelmann, R., *Syrisch-Palästinensische Gottheiten in Ägypten* (Leiden 1967).
Thériault, G., *Le culte d'* Homonoia (Lyon/Quebec 1996).
Vernant, J.-P., *Mythe et société en grèce ancienne* (Paris 1974) 103–120: La société des dieux.
——, *Myth and Society in Ancient Greece* (tr. by Lloyd, J. of Vernant 1974, Sussex 1980) 92–109: Society of the gods.
Wachsmuth, D., *Πόμπιμος ὁ δαίμων. Untersuchungen zu den antiken Sakralhandlungen bei Seereisen* (diss. Berlin 1967).
Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, U. von, *Der Glaube der Hellenen*, 2 vols. (Berlin 1931–2) (cited from ed. 3, Darmstadt 1959, with altered pagination).
Wyatt, N., Asherah, in: K. van der Toorn, B. Becking, P.W. van der Horst (eds.), *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* ^{2}(Leiden 1999) 99–105.

DER FUß DES DIONYSOS: ZU *PMG* 871

Renate Schlesier

Die Fähigkeit zur Epiphanie, zum Erscheinen unter den Menschen, zeichnet alle griechischen Gottheiten aus. Zu den Besonderheiten des Dionysos gehört jedoch, daß nur er geradezu als 'der kommende Gott'[1] par excellence aufgefaßt werden konnte, und es darf hinzugefügt werden, daß es speziell die Frauen waren, denen dieses immer wieder hervorgehobene und erwünschte 'Kommen' des Dionysos besonders lieb gewesen ist.[2] Das 'Kommen' dieses Gottes wird nun innerhalb der antiken Tradition von zwei Autoren mit dem Verweis auf einen bestimmten Körperteil, seinen Fuß, spezifiziert, und beide Male handelt es sich um einen instrumentalen Dativ: Dionysos soll kommen, und zwar 'mit dem Fuß' (ποδί). Was es damit auf sich hat, soll im folgenden untersucht werden.

Eines der beiden Zeugnisse findet sich im 5. Stasimon von Sophokles' *Antigone* (καθαρσίωι ποδί).[3] Das andere verdanken wir Plutarch, und darauf muß ich mich hier beschränken. Plutarch schreibt zu Beginn der 36. seiner *Griechischen Fragen*:

> διὰ τί τὸν Διόνυσον αἱ τῶν Ἠλείων γυναῖκες ὑμνοῦσαι παρακαλοῦσι βοέῳ ποδὶ παραγίγνεσθαι πρὸς αὐτάς; ἔχει δ' οὕτως ὁ ὕμνος,
>
> ἐλθεῖν, ἥρω Διόνυσε
> ἅλιον ἐς ναὸν ἁγνὸν
> σὺν Χαρίτεσσι ἐς ναὸν
> τῶι βοέωι ποδὶ δύων.
> εἶτα δὶς ἐπάιδουσιν
> ἄξιε ταῦρε.[4]

---

[1] Vgl. Hölderlin, in seiner berühmten Elegie 'Brod und Wein' von 1801 (Vers 54): 'Dorther kommt und zurük deutet der kommende Gott', Hölderlin 1976, 249. Dies wurde von den Interpreten oft auf Dionysos bezogen, siehe vor allem 'Der kommende Gott': Titel eines Kapitels in Ottos einflußreichem Dionysos-Buch, Otto 1933, 74–80. Die epiphanische Qualität des Dionysos wurde tatsächlich in der antiken Überlieferung besonders betont, literarisch vor allem im 7. Homerischen Hymnos (an Dionysos), 2 (siehe unten, Anm. 67), sowie in Euripides' *Bakchen*.

[2] Zur speziellen Rolle der Frauen im Umkreis des Dionysos vgl. jetzt Lyons (1997) 103–133; in der Bildkunst seit der Archaik: Isler-Kerényi 1990 und 1999.

[3] Sophokles, *Ant.* 1143; siehe dazu Scullion 1998. Vgl. auch Aristophanes, *Ra.* 331 (der Fuß des Iakchos).

[4] Plutarch, *Mor.* 299A–B. Die textkritische Situation des Kultlied-Wortlauts (= *PMG*

'Wenn die Frauen der Eleer den Dionysos hymnisch besingen, warum rufen sie ihn an, mit einem Ochsenfuß unter ihnen zu erscheinen? Der Hymnus lautet so:

"Komm, Heros Dionysos,
in den salzflutigen[5] Tempel, den reinen,
gemeinsam mit den Chariten in den Tempel
mit dem Ochsenfuß[6] tauchend[7]."

---

871) ist äußerst komplex. Ich gebe den Text nach Maßgabe der (allerdings widersprüchlichen) Editionen unemendiert wieder. Unklar und widersprüchlich ist vor allem die Lesart δύων: Titchener 1935. Page 1962 zufolge ist dies in den Codices bezeugt, bei früheren Editoren (außer Titchener) stünde jedoch θύων. Titchener allerdings vermerkt θύων nicht in seinem Apparat als Konjektur anderer Herausgeber. Deshalb wird heute oft vermutet, daß hier bei Titchener ein Druckfehler vorliegt, zumal andere Plutarch-Editoren (z. B. Wyttenbach, ebenso die editio Tauchnitiana und Bernardakis) oder Lyrik-Herausgeber (z. B. Bergk) kommentarlos θύων geben; so auch Halliday 1928. Diehl druckt in der ersten Auflage seiner Anthologie (1925) θύων, in der zweiten (1944) jedoch δύων; derselbe Editor gibt außerdem ebenfalls ohne Konjekturvermerk 'Αλεῖον (für ἅλιον). Vielleicht im Anschluß an Diehl 1925 behauptet West 1982, 146 im Gegensatz zu Titchener und Page, 'Αλεῖον und θύων sei die Überlieferung. Bei 'Αλεῖον handelt es sich aber offenbar um eine Konjektur von Cobet (so Titchener) bzw. Welcker (so Page, vgl. Bergk); die meisten Editoren verweisen darauf, daß in den Codices ἅλιον angegeben ist. Vor diesem Hintergrund scheint die Überlieferung ἅλιον gesichert. Ob dies auch für δύων gilt (wozu ich tendiere), wäre an den Plutarch-Handschriften, an Planudes' Ausgaben aus der Zeit um 1300 und an Stephanus' Edition von 1572 zu überprüfen; daß die für 2001 angekündigte Neuedition des Hymnos bei Furley / Bremer in dieser Frage weiterhelfen wird, ist zu hoffen. Zur textkritischen Verteidigung der lectio difficilior δύων vgl. Untersteiner 1955, 74 n.30; zahlreiche Beispiele auch für aktivischen Gebrauch von δύω bei Kühner / Blass ^{3}1892, 405; der mediale Gebrauch ist häufiger belegt, vgl. z. B. Homer, *Il.* 6, 136: dazu unten, Anm. 61.—Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der *Aetia Graeca* vgl. allgemein Titchener 1924. Zu anderen interpretationsgeschichtlich besonders wirksamen Konjekturen vgl. unten, Anm. 15–18 sowie 20.

[5] Textverständnis 'in den Tempel am Meer' für ἅλιον ἐς ναόν: so die Minderheit der Editoren und Interpreten (dazu gehören, in chronologischer Abfolge, Wyttenbach, Creuzer, Curtius, Halliday, Jeanmaire, Untersteiner [1955], Del Grande, Kerényi, Daraki).

[6] Meine Übersetzung entspricht hier der von Halliday 1928, 152: 'ox-foot' (siehe aber ebd. 158: 'bull-foot'); vgl. auch Wyttenbach ^{2}1827: 'pede bubulo'. Der im Kultlied gegebenen semantischen Verschiebung (von βόεος πούς zu ταῦρος) tragen nur wenige Autoren Rechnung, vgl. vor allem Cessi 1933, 311 ('piede di bue'), Untersteiner 1955, 72 und Del Grande ^{2}1962, 24 ('piede bovino'), Burkert 1977, 113 ('Rindsfuß'), Bérard 1976, 70 ('pied bovin'). Die überwältigende Mehrheit der Interpreten gibt βοέωι ποδί mit 'Stierfuß' (oder 'bull-foot'; 'pied de taureau') wieder.

[7] Die lectio δύων im Anschluß an die Editionen von Titchener, Diehl^{2} und Page (siehe oben, Anm. 4): sonst bisher nur bei Untersteiner 1955, 69, 72, 74 n.30, Del Grande ^{2}1962, 23–26, Bérard 1976, 70f. und Lada-Richards 1999, 79 (im Sinne von 'scendere'; 's'enfoncer'; 'to plunge'); die von Bérard besonders pointiert vertretene Annahme, es handele sich deshalb bei dem Tempel des Kultliedes in Wirklichkeit um eine heilige Grotte oder Höhle, halte ich allerdings nicht für zwingend. Zur Topographie vgl. unten, Anm. 54.

> Dann singen[8] sie zweimal:
> “Würdiger Stier”.’

Plutarch gibt auf die von ihm gestellte Frage keine Antwort, sondern fügt zur Erläuterung nur noch weitere Fragen hinzu, welche verschiedene Erklärungsmöglichkeiten eher implizieren als deutlich aussprechen:

> Ist es, weil manche den Gott “kuhgeboren” (βουγενής) und “Stier” (ταῦρος) nennen? Oder weil sie mit “Ochsenfuß” meinen “großer Fuß” (μέγας πούς), so wie der Dichter “kuhäugig” (βοῶπις) für “großäugig” (μεγαλόφθαλμος) und “stolz wie ein Ochse” (βουγάϊος) für “großspurig, prahlerisch” (μεγάλαυχος) sagt? Oder ist es eher, weil der Fuß des Ochsen (τοῦ βοὸς ὁ πούς) harmlos (ἀβλαβής) ist, doch der gehörnte Teil überaus schädlich (ἐπιβλαβής), daß sie den Gott anrufen, bei ihnen als sanfter (πρᾶος) und schmerzloser (ἄλυπος) zu erscheinen? Oder weil viele glauben, daß der Gott der Erfinder des Pfluges (ἄροτρον) und des Säens (σπόρος) gewesen ist?

Damit endet der Text. Zum Leidwesen der modernen Religionshistoriker gibt Plutarch also nicht nur keine klare Antwort auf seine Frage, sondern läßt bei seiner änigmatischen Behandlung der Frage außer dem—trotz der gelehrten und anspielungsreichen Erklärungen rätselhaft bleibenden—Ochsenfuß alles beiseite, was sonst noch in diesem Kulthymnos zur Sprache kommt. Eine andere Erwähnung des Liedes der elischen Frauen bei Plutarch hilft ebensowenig weiter. Sie findet sich in seiner Schrift *Über Isis und Osiris*, wo er sich, im Zusammenhang mit dem Begräbnis des Apis-Stiers bei den Osiris-Mysterien, auf einen knappen zusammenfassenden Satz beschränkt: ‘die Frauen der Eleer rufen [Dionysos] ebenfalls herbei, bittend, ‘mit dem Ochsenfuß solle der Gott kommen’ zu ihnen.’[9] Bemerkenswerterweise sind nun die genannten beiden Plutarch-Stellen die einzigen aus der Antike überlieferten, direkten oder indirekten Zeugnisse vom Wortlaut eines Hymnos der elischen Frauen an Dionysos.

---

[8] Plutarchs Wortwahl εἶτα . . . ἐπάιδουσιν wurde bisher meist als tautologische temporale Aussage verstanden (‘dann singen sie danach’); die im Kontext wahrscheinlichere Lesart wäre jedoch: ‘dann besingen sie beschwörerisch (zauberisch)’ (im Sinne von: eine ἐπῳδή singen). Daß die beiden so gesungenen Worte der abschließende Anrede, ἄξιε ταῦρε, wiederholt werden (wie schon vorher ἐς ναόν, vgl. unten, Anm. 16), unterstreicht die beschwörerische Qualität des Gesangs. Zur Vorgeschichte der Gattung Hymnos als Zaubergesang vgl. Wünsch 1914, 142–144. Zur literarischen Überlieferung griechischer Hymnen vgl. Bremer 1981.

[9] Plutarch, *Mor.* 364E–F: αἱδ’ Ἠλείων γυναῖκες καὶ παρακαλοῦσιν εὐχόμεναι ‘ποδὶ βοείῳ τὸν θεὸν ἐλθεῖν’ πρὸς αὐτάς.

Es verwundert nicht, daß diese so isolierte und seltsame Überlieferung die Phantasie und den Erklärungswillen der modernen Interpreten in hohem Maße gereizt hat. Ohne Übertreibung läßt sich sagen, daß kaum ein Religionshistoriker oder an Dionysos interessierter klassischer Philologe diese Stelle unbeachtet gelassen hat.[10] Weitgehend unstrittig ist zwar, daß der von Plutarch zitierte Text metrisch geformt ist, doch wurde keine Einigkeit darüber erzielt, welche lyrischen Versmaße hier verwendet sind (Anapäste? Äoliker? Ioniker?).[11] Daß der Text als Dithyrambos[12] bezeichnet werden kann, scheint wegen seiner kultischen Zuordnung zu Dionysos eher unproblematisch. Schon die Datierung des Hymnos aber ist höchst umstritten. Die dafür vorgeschlagene Chronologie reicht von der Meinung, es handele sich um den ältesten überlieferten literarischen Text aus der griechischen Antike überhaupt, oder zumindest um das älteste überlieferte originale Kultlied,[13] bis hin zu der Auffassung, daß wir es hier mit einem hellenistischen oder gar einem für Plutarch zeitgenössischen, also kaiserzeitlichen Dokument zu tun haben.[14]

Ebensowenig überrascht, daß eine Reihe von darin vorkommenden Wörtern die Philologen herausgefordert hat, entsprechend einer weitverbreiteten Tendenz in den Text mit Konjekturen und Emendationen verändernd einzugreifen.[15] Die Wiederholung der direktionalen Ortsbestimmung ‘in den Tempel’ (ἐς ναόν) ist zuweilen einer Streichung zum Opfer gefallen,[16] und die Spezifikation des Tempels als eines am Meer gelegenen (‘salzflutig’, ἅλιον) wurde durch eine ähnlich klingende ethnische Bezeichnung ersetzt (‘von den Eleern’, ’Αλείων).[17] Hingegen findet die von A.B. Cook stammende Konjektur[18] ‘Komm im Frühling, oh Dionysos’ (ἐλθεῖν ἦρ’ ὦ Διόνυσε) anstelle von ‘Komm, Heros Dionysos’ (ἐλθεῖν ἥρω Διόνυσε) kaum noch Anhänger, was damit zusammenhängen mag, daß der von den ‘Cambridge Ritualists’ favorisierte Vegetationsgeist und Frühlingsgott Dionysos mittlerweile aus der Mode gekommen ist. Dies ändert nichts an der Tatsache, daß auch der von einer Konjektur verschonte ‘Heros Dionysos’ weiterhin Irritationen auslöst, ist doch die Vokativform ἥρω[19] ein Hapax und überdies von einer solchen Bestimmung, die mit seinem göttlichen Status nicht vereinbar zu sein scheint, sonst nichts Explizites bekannt.[20]

---

[10] Ein auffällig zurückhaltender Umgang mit der Stelle findet sich allerdings etwa bei Rohde ^{2}1898, 12 n.1, Dodds ^{2}1960, xviii, Burkert 1977, 113 und Henrichs 1978, 146; ohne Bezug auf das elische Kultlied: Vernant 1985.

[11] Zur Metrik vgl. vor allem Usener 1887, 80f.; Wilamowitz 1921, 384f.; Halliday 1928, 158; Del Grande ^{2}1962, 24; West 1982, 146f.

[12] Das elische Kultlied als Dithyrambos: Harrison 1903, 437; Calame 1977, 153; Zimmermann 1992, 22 und 137.

[13] Usener 1887, 81: 'ältestes denkmal griechischen versbaus', gefolgt vor allem von Wide 1907, 263, Wünsch 1914, 146, Kern 1926, 154, Preisendanz 1936, 683, Brown 1982, 305; vgl. auch Casadio 1994, 13f. mit n.10 (Rekurs auf die von den Pylos-Täfelchen in Linear B dokumentierte, frühe peloponnesische Dionysos-Verehrung).

[14] Skeptisch gegenüber einer Frühdatierung, 'schon wegen der Form Διόνυσε, aber auch aus sprachlichen Gründen': Wilamowitz 1921, 384; Mitsopoulos-Leon 1984, 278 mit n.24 hält eine Entstehung 'in hellenistischer Zeit' oder 'orphische Einflüsse' für möglich.

[15] Ich beziehe mich im folgenden nur auf exemplarische bzw. interpretationsgeschichtlich besonders wirksame Konjekturen (dazu auch oben, Anm. 4, unten, Anm. 16–20). Isoliert blieb z. B. die von Wilamowitz 1921, 384f. angebotene Konjektur ἁγναῖσιν (σὺν Χαρίτεσσιν) für (ἐς ναὸν) ἁγνόν, da er 'nicht glauben' kann, 'daß der Dionysostempel das für Göttinnen gebräuchliche Beiwort erhalten hätte', nämlich *castus*; siehe auch zu einer Parallelstelle bei Alkman (καὶ ναὸς ἁγνᾶς εὐπύργω Σεράπνας), ebd. 239 n.1: 'Therapna ist die Ortsnymphe', die als 'keusch' bezeichnet werde. Spätere Alkman-Editoren übernehmen allerdings die—von Wilamowitz

---

scharf abgelehnte—Konjektur von Hermann (ναὸς ἁγνός), PMG Alkman 14 (b) = Calame fr. 5; vgl. dazu den Kommentar von Calame 1983, 352–354. Zum Wortgebrauch von ἁγνός siehe Rudhardt ^{2}1992, 39–43; Burkert 1977, 405f.

[16] So z. B. West 1982, 146f. Zur schon früher vorgeschlagenen Athetierung des zweiten ἐς ναόν siehe Halliday 1928, 157 und Page 1962, 462. Zur Rechtfertigung der Wiederholung (mit Hinweis auf die weitere Wiederholung, ἄξιε ταῦρε) vgl. Schwenn 1927, 15; Brandt 1965, 94f.

[17] Die Konjektur ’Αλείων (vgl. dazu auch oben, Anm. 4), die wahrscheinlich von E.Q. Visconti (um 1800) stammt, hat auch Bergk ^{4}1882 überzeugt und wurde von Page 1962 akzeptiert; vgl. dagegen und gegen Welckers Konjektur ’Αλεῖον von 1826 bereits Creuzer ^{3}1843, 7 n.1. Das sich aus diesen Konjekturen ergebende Textverständnis ‘(Tempel) von den Eleern’ bzw. ‘(Tempel) von Elis’ wird von der großen Mehrheit der modernen Interpreten adaptiert (dazu gehören in chronologischer Reihenfolge etwa Preller, Rapp, Weniger, Usener, Dieterich, Nilsson, Wide, Harrison, Wünsch, Wilamowitz, Schwenn, Schroeder, Otto, Preisendanz, Thomson, Bérard, Brown, Mitsopoulos-Leon, Detienne, Versnel, Scullion, Bremer); zu den Ausnahmen vgl. oben Anm. 5.

[18] Übernommen von Harrison 1912, 205 n.1 und Halliday 1928; Cook 1925, 823 n.1 distanzierte sich allerdings von dieser Konjektur und bezeichnete sie als ‘ill-advised’.

[19] Akzeptiert von Schwyzer 1939, 837 ad 480 mit Hinweis auf das elische Kultlied.

[20] Aus diesem Grunde will Del Grande ^{2}1962, 21–24 mit Untersteiner 1942, 66f. ἥρω als Genitiv (zu ναόν) verstehen (‘tempio dell’eroe’); ausführliche Begründung bei Untersteiner 1955, 75f. n.32. Untersteiner 1942, 68 und 1955, 72 vermutet, daß es sich bei dem hier angeblich im Genitiv anonym erwähnten Heros um Narkaios, den Sohn der elischen Heroine Physkoa von Dionysos, handelt (zu Physkoa: unten, Anm. 32), mit Berufung (passim) auf analoge Verbindungen des Dionysos mit einem Lokalheros in anderen Kulten. Weitere Konjekturen, die ebenfalls das Skandalon eines ‘Heros Dionysos’ zu umgehen versuchen: z. B. West 1982, 146f.: ἐλθ’ ἵρ’ ὦ bzw. ἐλθ’ ἐν ἵρ’ ὦ. Gegen den ersten Vorschlag spricht (siehe Bremer 2001) die lexikalische Unmöglichkeit, einen Gott mit dem Adjektiv ἱερός zu bezeichnen, gegen den zweiten der Umstand, daß dann vor der zweimaligen Nennung des

Als besonders zählebig hat sich vor allem in jüngerer Zeit die Konjektur ’Αλείων anstelle von ἄλιον erwiesen. Man machte sich dabei nicht die Mühe herauszufinden, ob in der antiken Literatur oder gar in einem Kulttext jemals sonst ein Tempel durch seine Zugehörigkeit zu einer bestimmten Ethnie definiert wird. Tatsächlich ist dies meines Wissens nicht der Fall.[21] Tempel werden in literarischen und kultischen Texten gewöhnlich entweder durch die Zugehörigkeit zu einer bestimmten Gottheit oder durch ihr topographisches Ambiente definiert. Die Konjektur mußte jedoch für alle diejenigen höchst attraktiv sein, die mit einem am Meer gelegenen Dionysos-Tempel unter der Obhut der Frauen von Elis nichts anzufangen wußten. Zugegebenermaßen ist ein solcher Tempel sonst nicht schriftlich und auch bisher nicht archäologisch bezeugt.[22] Der Hauptgrund für die Überzeugungskraft dieser Konjektur scheint jedoch darin zu liegen, daß es ohne sie nicht gelingen könnte, eine andere Überlieferung mit dem nur bei Plutarch bezeugten Wortlaut des Hymnos in Übereinstimmung zu bringen.

Diese andere Überlieferung ergibt sich aus Pausanias, genauer gesagt, aus den der Landschaft Elis gewidmeten Teilen seiner Periegese (Buch V und VI). Die Angaben des Pausanias liefern nun für viele Interpreten das ‘missing link’, mit dessen Hilfe der bei Plutarch zitierte

---

ναός ein Synonym stünde (ἱερόν, ‘Heiligtum’). Gegen die Lesart ἦ ρ’ ὦ für ἥρω, auf die mich Henk Versnel brieflich aufmerksam machte, eine aus der Gattung der Epigramme bekannte emphatische Ausdrucksweise, spricht der hier vorliegende Kontext, ein Kulthymnos. Andere Heilungsversuche des Problems bestehen darin, den Vokativ ἥρω nicht im kultischen Sinne von ‘Heros’ zu interpretieren (d. h. als vergöttlichten Sterblichen), sondern als bloßen Ehrentitel (‘Herr’); so z. B. Wilamowitz ^{3}1959, 9, wie Pfister 1912, 547. Zur Debatte darüber vgl. Wide 1907, 262f.; Farnell 1921, 15f.; Nock 1972, 595f. Vgl. dazu auch Brown 1982, der seinerseits als lectio facilior die Konjektur ἐλθ’ ἡμῖν, ὦ Διόνυσε vorschlägt (ebd. 313). Gernet / Boulanger 1932, 244 und Brelich 1958, 362–368 (mit Kerényi) betonen jedoch unter Rekurs auch auf den elischen Kulthymnos, daß Dionysos als Heros und Gott zugleich zu verstehen ist; vgl. auch Cessi 1933, 311 mit n.30. Jeanmaire 1951, 50 dagegen will den ‘Heros Dionysos’ als Nachfolger einer älteren Stiergottheit verstehen. Nilsson ^{3}1967, 571 n.3 findet sich zähneknirschend mit der ‘archaisierenden Anrede’ ἥρω ab.

[21] Nicht als Gegenbeweis eignet sich das Alkman-Fragment *PMG* 14 (b) (siehe oben, Anm. 15): Σεράπνα ist hier wohl nicht als unpersönliche Ortsbestimmung, sondern als Name der Ortsgottheit zu verstehen.

[22] Allerdings ist die Küste des antiken Elis bisher archäologisch nur unzureichend erforscht, vgl. Servais 1964; Rizakis 1991. Verschüttungen und Überflutungen durch Erdbeben im Küstenbereich, nach der Antike zunehmende Lagunen- und Sumpfbildungen sowie verschlammte Flußmündungen erschweren den archäologischen Zugriff, vgl. Philippson / Kirsten 1959, 319–349. Pausanias hat die elische Küste wohl nicht bereist, jedenfalls nicht beschrieben.

Hymnos entschlüsselt werden soll. Denn Pausanias betont tatsächlich, daß die Eleer unter den Göttern besonders den Dionysos verehren und sagen, daß er sie am Fest der Thyia (bzw. der Thyiai) besuche.[23] Da hier also ausdrücklich von einer im Festrhythmus regelmäßig stattfindenden Epiphanie des Dionysos die Rede ist, lag die Deutung nahe, daß die Erscheinung des Gottes in der Stadt Elis bzw. in ihrer unmittelbaren Nähe durch eben jenen *hymnos kletikos* herbeigeführt wird, dessen Wortlaut Plutarch in den *Griechischen Fragen* bezeugt. Dafür schien auch zu sprechen, daß dem Festnamen, der auf Thyiai oder Thyiaden, also auf rasende Frauen im Dionysoskult, verweist, im Hymnos das Partizip 'rasend' (θύων) korrespondieren könnte.[24] Mit einer solchen identifizierenden Deutung war jedoch ein 'Tempel am Meer' nicht zu vereinbaren. Denn die Lage des Festplatzes der Thyia wird bei Pausanias exakt spezifiziert: acht Stadien vor der Stadt Elis. Die Meeresküste jedoch liegt beträchtlich weiter davon entfernt.[25]

---

[23] Pausanias VI, 26.1: θεῶν δὲ ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα Διόνυσον σέβουσιν Ἠλεῖοι καὶ τὸν θεόν σφισιν ἐπιφοιτᾶν ἐς τῶν Θυίων τὴν ἑορτὴν λέγουσιν. ἀπέχει μέν γε τῆς πόλεως ὅσον τε ὀκτὼ στάδια ἔνθα τὴν ἑορτὴν ἄγουσι Θυῖα ὀνομάζοντες (so in der Edition von Rocho-Pereira; Θυῖα ist Sylburgs Konjektur aus dem 16. Jh.—in den Handschriften steht θυίαν bzw. θῦιον). Der Festname ἡ Θυία (die Thyia, fem. sing.) wäre also handschriftlich gestützt, zuvor aber wäre, mit der Lesart Θυῖα, vom 'Fest der Thyiai' (also der rasenden Frauen im Umkreis des Dionysos) die Rede. Folgt man Sylburgs Konjektur, so würde Pausanias nur von einem Fest sprechen, das er zweimal als τὰ Θυία (die Thyia, neutr. plur.) bezeichnet. Das Textverständnis der meisten Interpreten schließt an diese Konjektur an, vgl. z. B. Nilsson 1906, 291–293; dagegen: mit Rekurs auf die Handschriften und guten Argumenten, Preisendanz 1922 und 1936. Vgl. auch unten, Anm. 26 und 59.

[24] Vorausgesetzt, es handelt sich bei θύων um die Überlieferung; auf der Basis dieser lectio wollte Usener 1896, 43 Dionysos in Elis 'als Θυῖος oder Θύος' verstehen. Falls es jedoch zutrifft, wie Titchener und Page nahelegen, daß stattdessen δύων überliefert ist (siehe oben, Anm. 4), so wäre θύων eine Konjektur, die möglicherweise ebenso wie die Konjektur Ἀλείων bzw. Ἀλεῖον dazu dienen sollte, den Wortlaut des von Plutarch überlieferten elischen Kulthymnos auf Dionysos mit Pausanias' Angaben über den Dionysoskult der Eleer in Übereinstimmung zu bringen. Vgl. dazu auch kritisch Del Grande ^{2}1962, 22f.

[25] Nach Pausanias VI, 26.4 und Strabon VIII, 3.4 C 337 war Kyllene, der Hafen von Elis, 120 Stadien von der Stadt entfernt. Die genaue geographische Lage von Kyllene ist jedoch bis heute umstritten, da Strabon dazu mißverständliche Angaben zu machen scheint und archäologische Ausgrabungen keine eindeutigen Zeugnisse erbracht haben. Seit Servais 1961 hat sich in der Forschung die Auffassung durchgesetzt, Kyllene mit dem heutigen Killini (dem bedeutenden mittelalterlichen Hafenort Chiarenza bzw. Glarentza) an der Nordspitze des Kaps Chelonatas zu identifizieren, und nicht etwa, wie früher vermutet wurde, weiter im Norden in Richtung Achaia anzusetzen. Vgl. die Zusammenfassung der älteren Forschungspositionen bei Frazer 1898, IV 109. Winkler / König 1988, 345 lokalisieren Kyllene jedoch in

Nun steht keineswegs fest, daß die elischen Frauen den Hymnos auf eben diesem Festplatz gesungen haben, und zwar während des Festes der Thyia. Pausanias zitiert den Hymnos nicht (ebensowenig wie die gesamte restliche Überlieferung außer Plutarch), ja, er erwähnt mit keinem Wort, daß Frauen bei diesem Fest eine besondere Rolle zukam.[26] Die entscheidende Funktion übten dabei vielmehr nach dem Zeugnis seiner männlichen Gewährsleute (er selbst war nicht zugegen) männliche Priester aus, die in einem Gebäude (οἴκημα), keinem Tempel also im buchstäblichen Sinne des Wortes, ein Weinwunder mit zunächst leeren Bronzekesseln (λέβητες)—also keinen Krügen oder Amphoren, wie oft angenommen wurde—zelebrierten.[27]

Andererseits unterstreicht Pausanias zwar nicht hier, aber an weiteren Stellen durchaus, daß Frauen im elischen Dionysoskult besondere Funktionen innehatten. Ja, wir verdanken ihm sogar genaue Nachrichten über ein Kollegium von 16 Frauen,[28] das bei den Eleern spezielle Aufgaben wahrnahm, und dies sowohl bei der Verehrung des Dionysos als auch im Herakult von Olympia. Im Polis-Kult des Dionysos sind bekanntlich auch anderswo analoge Frauenkollegien bezeugt, jeweils mit genau spezifizierter Mitgliederzahl, nämlich die 14 Gerarai in Athen,[29] welche die Hochzeit des Dionysos mit der

---

ihrem Plinius-Kommentar (ad IV, 13) südlich des Vorgebirges Chelonatas beim heutigen Lutra Killinis, in der Nähe der Westspitze der Peloponnes. Siehe auch unten, Anm. 54.

[26] Falls es sich nicht sogar, wie die Handschriften nahelegen (vgl. oben, Anm. 23), um zwei Feste handelt: das zuerst erwähnte 'Fest der Thyiai' (also ein Fest rasender Frauen), bei dem Dionysos selbst erscheint, und das 'Fest, das sie Thyia nennen' (für das als Beteiligte nur Männer genannt werden), bei dem sich ein Weinwunder ereignet; vgl. Preisendanz 1936, 681: 'Keinesfalls aber brauchen beide Feste identisch gewesen zu sein'. So auch Scullion (im Druck). Andere antike Autoren, von denen die Geschichte vom Weinwunder bei den Eleern mit ähnlichem Wortlaut überliefert ist, nennen das dazu gehörige Fest τὰ Διονύσια (Theopompos von Chios bei Athenaios I, 61 [34 a] = *FGrHist* 115 F 277; Pseudo-Aristoteles, *Mir.* 123).

[27] Pausanias VI, 26.1–2; Brown 1982, 305 spricht mit Halliday 1928, 155 irrtümlich von 'jars'.

[28] Die 16 Frauen bei den Eleern: nur belegt bei Plutarch (als heiliges Kollegium im Dionysoskult, siehe unten, Anm. 35) und Pausanias V, 16.2–8; VI, 24.10 (vor allem im Herakult, aber auch im Kult der dionysischen Heroine Physkoa, Anm. 38). Vgl. dazu Weniger 1883; die gelehrte, oft zitierte, aber viele unbewiesene Hypothesen enthaltende Schrift ist leider noch nicht durch eine kritische neuere Forschungsarbeit ersetzt. Hilfreich zur Rolle der 16 Frauen im Herakult ist jedoch Calame 1977, 210–214; nach Henrichs 1978, 153 war das Kollegium 'clearly maenadic in origin'.

[29] Pseudo-Demosthenes 59, 73–78; zur Debatte über die Funktion der Gerarai vgl. Lyons 1997, 116–118, 132. Siehe auch unten, Anm. 76.

Basilinna ausrichten, sowie die 11 Dionysiades von Sparta, die einen Wettkampf im Laufen veranstalten und (gemeinsam mit einem anderen Frauen-Kollegium, den Leukippides) dem Dionysos und einem Heros opfern, der ihm zugeordnet ist.[30]

Zu den Obliegenheiten der 16 Frauen von Elis gehört nun nach Pausanias, daß sie zwei Chöre aufstellen (ἱστᾶσιν), über deren Veranstaltungsort und Zeitpunkt im Festzyklus er allerdings nichts mitteilt.[31] Jeder der beiden Chöre ist nach einer Heroine benannt, der eine nach Hippodameia, der Tochter des Oinomaos und Gattin des Pelops, des für den Gründungskult der olympischen Spiele wichtigsten Heros, und der andere Chor nach Physkoa ('die Dickbäuchige'?), einer Geliebten des Dionysos, die durch ihn Mutter des Knaben Narkaios wurde und die aus einer Ortschaft namens Orthia in der dem Meer vorgelagerten Tiefebene von Elis (ἡ Ἦλις ἡ Κοίλη) stammte. Jener Physkoa und ihrem Sohn wird an dieser Stelle bei Pausanias sonderbarerweise nachgesagt, daß sie überhaupt die ersten waren, die dem Dionysos göttliche Ehren (τιμαί) erwiesen. Von Physkoa ihrerseits berichtet Pausanias schließlich noch in auffällig zurückhaltender Wortwahl, daß sie außer dem ihr von den 16 Frauen gewidmeten Chor noch 'andere Ehren' (γέρα ἄλλα) empfing—zweifellos, wie auch sonst oft bei Pausanias, ein Hinweis auf euphemistisch zu behandelnde Riten im Toten- oder Heroenkult.[32]

Der nach Physkoa benannte und von den 16 Frauen aufgestellte Chor ist nun erwartungsgemäß von manchen Interpreten ebenfalls zur Deutung der Funktion des bei Plutarch bezeugten Hymnos herangezogen worden.[33] Die Hypothese, daß uns in diesem Hymnos exakt der Wortlaut vorläge, den jener Chor vorgetragen habe, hat jedoch wenig Wahrscheinlichkeit für sich. Wenn nämlich der Chorreigen den Namen der Physkoa trägt, so ist eher sie, die Geliebte des Dionysos und Mutter seines Sohnes, als Adressatin anzunehmen, denn der Gott Dionysos selbst. Dafür spricht auch, daß Pausanias den ihr gewidmeten Chor explizit mit den von ihr empfangenen 'anderen Ehren' parallelisiert.

---

[30] Dionysiades und Leukippides: Pausanias III, 13.7; vgl. dazu Calame 1977, 323–333.

[31] Pausanias V, 16.6. Die oft aufgestellte Behauptung—z. B. bei Calame 1977, 211; Nagy 1990, 365–367—, die Chöre würden beim Fest der Heraia aufgeführt, läßt sich aus Pausanias' Text nicht zweifelsfrei ableiten; vgl. unten, Anm. 38.

[32] Zu Physkoa: Pausanias V, 16.6–7; Hanslik 1941. Zu möglichen Beziehungen des Namens dieser Heroine zu Lokris (Physkos als Stammvater der Lokrer) siehe Weniger 1883, 16f. Zu einem für den lokrischen Ort Physkos im 2. Jh. n. Chr. inschriftlich bezeugten (Sokolowski, *LSCG* No. 181), aus Frauen und Männern bestehenden dionysischen Kultverein vgl. Henrichs 1978, 155f.; seine Vermutung, daß es sich hier nur um ein 'routine mountain picnic' handelte, wird durch den Wortlaut der Inschrift (einer Kultregulation) allerdings kaum gestützt.

[33] Vgl. Weniger 1883, 2; Scullion (im Druck). Nach Untersteiner 1942, 71 und 73 besitzen wir mit dem bei Plutarch bezeugten Hymnos 'un frammento' eines der beiden von den 16 elischen Frauen aufgestellten Chöre; Untersteiner bezieht den Terminus ἥρω (siehe dazu auch oben, Anm. 20) im Hymnos auf Physkoas—von Dionysos gezeugten—Sohn Narkaios; vgl. Untersteiner 1955, 71f.

Auch unabhängig davon gehen nun die meisten Interpreten davon aus, daß die bei Plutarch erwähnten, den Hymnos auf Dionysos singenden elischen Frauen mit den bei Pausanias in verschiedenen Funktionen dargestellten 16 Frauen identisch sind.[34] Dies läßt sich jedoch nicht aufrechterhalten, und zwar nicht allein deshalb, weil Pausanias über den Dionysos-Hymnos der elischen Frauen kein Wort verliert. Plutarch seinerseits bezeichnet als Sängerinnen dieses Hymnos eben nicht die 16 Frauen, sondern 'die Frauen der Eleer'. Daß er den für Elis spezifischen Terminus 'die 16 Frauen' durchaus kannte, belegt eine andere Textstelle,[35] bei der er von einer kultischen Hikesie und politischen Versöhnungsaktion berichtet, die die 16 im Rahmen ihrer offiziellen Funktion vollzogen haben. Es ist kaum anzunehmen, daß Plutarch, der erwiesenermaßen großen Wert auf exakte kultische Termini technici legte, diesen Fachausdruck nicht auch in den *Griechischen Fragen* benutzt hätte, wenn es denn tatsächlich die 16 Frauen sind, die den Dionysos-Hymnos singen. Und noch weniger hätte er es sich wohl an der entsprechenden Stelle in der Schrift *Über Isis und Osiris*,[36] die an die ehrwürdige Priesterin Klea, die Anführerin der delphischen Thyiaden, gerichtet war, entgehen lassen, die korrekte religiöse Fachterminologie zu verwenden, falls sie wirklich berechtigt gewesen wäre.

---

[34] Die Gleichsetzung der Sängerinnen des Kultliedes mit dem elischen Kollegium der 16 Frauen wurde vor allem von der Mehrzahl derjeniger Interpreten vollzogen, die sich die Konjektur 'Αλείων bzw. 'Αλεῖον zueigen machen (vgl. Anm. 17); Halliday 1928, 156 und Calame 1977, 244 behaupten irrtümlich, daß die Identifikation durch Plutarch belegt sei; vgl. auch Farnell 1909, 155; Brelich 1958, 362 n.129; vorsichtiger: Frazer 1898, III 592. Die Gleichsetzung der elischen Frauen in Plutarchs *Aetia Graeca* mit den 16 wurde bisher nur von Preisendanz 1936, 683 (684 wieder eingeschränkt) und Scullion (im Druck) ausdrücklich problematisiert. Vgl. unten, Anm. 79.

[35] Plutarch, *De mul. virt.*, *Mor.* 251E: αἱ περὶ τὸν Διόνυσον ἱεραὶ γυναῖκες, ἃς ἑκκαίδεκα καλοῦσιν.

[36] Siehe oben, Anm. 9.

Ein genauerer Blick auf Pausanias' Text zeigt, daß der Perieget ebenfalls sehr präzise zwischen den elischen Frauen überhaupt und dem Kollegium der 16 zu unterscheiden wußte. Die 16, so heißt es bei Pausanias, wurden von den 16 Städten der Landschaft Elis nach folgenden Kriterien ausgewählt: Sie waren an Jahren die ältesten und unterschieden sich von den anderen Frauen durch ihre besonders ehrwürdige Stellung (ἀξίωμα) wie durch ihr herausragendes öffentliches Ansehen (δόξα). Es ist wenig wahrscheinlich, daß diese Frauen in den von ihnen aufgestellten Chorreigen selber sangen und tanzten oder gar, daß die Chorreigen ausschließlich von diesen 16 Ältesten aufgeführt wurden.[37] Vielmehr ist davon auszugehen, daß sie eher die Choregen waren, und nicht etwa die Choreuten. Eine zentrale Funktion besaßen die 16 vor allem im Herakult von Olympia, wie Pausanias selbst betont. Dort oblag es ihnen, einen nach drei Altersgruppen gestaffelten Wettlauf (ἅμιλλα δρόμου) der Jungfrauen im Stadion auszurichten. Eine einzige, besonders feierliche Pflicht beim penteterischen Herafest war allerdings ihnen allein vorbehalten: Sie webten alle vier Jahre den Peplos für die Göttin Hera, und verfügten dazu auf der Agora von Olympia sogar über ein ihnen reserviertes Gebäude (οἴκημα).[38]

Pausanias verwendet jedoch ebenso wie Plutarch neben der terminologischen Bezeichnung 'die 16 Frauen' auch den Ausdruck 'die elischen Frauen' bzw. 'die Frauen (scil. der Eleer)'. Es fragt sich aber, ob beide Denominationen tatsächlich miteinander gleichgesetzt werden können, wie es von vielen Interpreten mit Selbstverständlichkeit angenommen wird. Die Frauen nämlich, so heißt es bei Pausanias, dürfen in Olympia einmal im Jahr das Hippodamion, das Heiligtum der Heroine Hippodameia, betreten, ihr opfern (θύουσιν) 'und andere Handlungen zu ihren Ehren vollziehen' (καὶ ἄλλα ἐς τιμὴν δρῶσιν αὐτῆς). Über ähnliche Privilegien verfügen die Frauen (also wiederum offenbar im Unterschied zu den Männern) gegenüber dem Heros Achilleus: Zu Beginn der heiligen Festspiele in Olympia vollziehen sie an dem leeren Grabmal des Achilleus in der Stadt Elis 'andere Handlungen ihm zu Ehren' und beklagen ihn, wörtlich: 'haben den Brauch, ihn zu beklagen, indem sie sich selbst schlagen' (κόπτεσθαι νομίζουσιν αὐτόν).[39]

---

[37] So auch Calame 1977, 212.

[38] Geschichte und Aufgaben des Kollegiums der 16 nur bei Pausanias: Hippodameia 'versammelt' (ἀθροῖσαι) die 16 (also waren sie schon vorher institutionalisiert) zum Zweck der ersten Heraien in Olympia (V, 16.4); Wahl der 16 aus den 16 elischen Städten nach dem Tod des Tyrannen Damophon von Pisa (um 600 v. Chr.), mit Auswahlkriterien (V, 16.5); 'jetzt' Wahl der 16 aus den acht Phylen (je zwei) (V, 16.7). Zu den Aufgaben: Weben des Peplos für Hera zu den penteterischen Heraien (V, 16.2), in einem Gebäude auf der Agora in Olympia (VI, 24.10); Veranstaltung des Mädchen-Wettlaufs bei den Heraien im Stadion von Olympia (V, 16.2–3); die heiligen 16 haben 16 Dienerinnen (V, 16.3); die 16 stellen zwei Chöre auf, für Hippodameia und Physkoa (V, 16.6.); die 16 müssen—wie die Hellanodiken (mit denen sie offenbar gleichgestellt sind)—vor ihren institutionellen Handlungen Reinigungsopfer vollziehen, mit einem Schwein und Wasser, an der Quelle Piera, an der durch die Ebene führenden Straße zwischen Olympia und der Stadt Elis (V, 16.8).

Pausanias sagt mit keinem Wort, daß diese Handlungen den 16 in ihrer offiziellen Funktion vorbehalten blieben. Seine Wortwahl suggeriert statt dessen, daß alle verheirateten Frauen (γυναῖκες) der Eleer, unabhängig von ihrer Zugehörigkeit zu bestimmten Altersgruppen und gesellschaftlichen Schichten, sich am Heroenkult in Olympia für Hippodameia (jährlich) und in Elis für Achilleus (alle vier Jahre) beteiligen konnten, und eben nicht nur das Kollegium der 16, das ja durch die Zahl seiner Mitglieder und die Bedingungen der Mitgliedschaft streng begrenzt war. Auch von einer Verwaltung oder geordneten Veranstaltung dieser beiden, den Frauen reservierten Heroenkulte durch die 16 ist bei Pausanias ebensowenig die Rede wie von Chören, die etwa bei diesen Anlässen aufgestellt wurden. Im Falle des Achilleus-Kultes zumal wird von Pausanias gerade das Unartikulierte, gestisch Ekstatische der Klage betont, was sich mit artikuliertem Chorgesang kaum vereinbaren ließe.

Angesichts einer solchen konsistenten Unterscheidung zwischen dem Kollegium der 16 und den elischen Frauen überhaupt ist davon auszugehen, daß auch Pausanias' älterer Zeitgenosse Plutarch sich bewußt eben dieser Differenzierung bediente, wenn er davon spricht, daß 'die Frauen der Eleer', und nicht etwa bloß das Kollegium der 16, den Dionysos mit dem von ihm zitierten *hymnos kletikos* besingen. Daß auch dieser Hymnos Bestandteil eines Heroenkultes ist, ähnlich wie die von Pausanias berichtete Verehrung der Hippodameia, der Physkoa und des Achilleus durch die elischen Frauen, wird sogleich in der Anrede, ἥρω Διόνυσε, deutlich. Es kann und soll hier jedoch nicht ausgeschlossen werden, daß es nicht auch zu den Obliegenheiten der 16 gehörte, einen Chor für diesen Heros aufzustellen, analog zu dem Chor für Hippodameia und demjenigen für Physkoa. Festzuhalten ist nur: weder Pausanias noch Plutarch zählen die Aufstellung eines Chores für Dionysos zu den Pflichten des Kollegiums der 16.

---

[39] Kultische Aufgaben, die nach Pausanias den 'Frauen der Eleer' vorbehalten waren: jährlicher Heroenkult (Opfer und Totenkult) für Hippodameia in Olympia (VI, 20.7); penteterischer Heroenkult (Klage und Totenkult) für Achilleus in der Stadt Elis (VI, 23.3). Zur Übersetzung von κόπτεσθαι νομίζουσιν αὐτόν (ebd.) vgl. Untersteiner 1955, 72: 'hanno l'usanza di piangerlo battendosi il petto'.

Die elischen Heroenkulte für Hippodameia, Physkoa und Achilleus, über die wir nur durch Pausanias, und der elische Heroenkult für Dionysos, über den wir nur durch Plutarch unterrichtet sind, weisen nun bemerkenswerte Unterschiede und Gemeinsamkeiten auf. Die Kulte für Hippodameia, Physkoa und Achilleus haben miteinander gemein, daß sie neben den von ihm genannten Handlungen auch auf den Tod bezogene Heroenriten ('andere Ehren') enthalten, die Pausanias sich scheut, genauer zu spezifizieren. Daß Entsprechendes für Dionysos gegolten haben könnte, ist aus unserer einzigen Quelle, Plutarch, nicht direkt zu entnehmen. Dies ließe sich jedoch aus dem unmittelbaren Kontext schließen, in dem in der Schrift *Über Isis und Osiris* auf den Dionysos-Hymnos verwiesen wird; denn dort werden die Zerstückelungen, Belebungen und Wiedergeburten des Osiris nicht allein mit dem elischen Kulthymnos in Verbindung gebracht, sondern auch mit dem kuhgeborenen (βουγενής) Dionysos, der von den Argivern aus dem Wasser emporgerufen wird, sowie mit dem Dionysos von Delphi, der in der Nähe des Orakels begraben liegt.[40]

Der Heroenkult für Hippodameia und Physkoa unterscheidet sich jedoch nach dem Zeugnis des Pausanias von dem des Achilleus in einem entscheidenden Punkt: Nur von Achilleus heißt es, daß er ekstatisch beklagt wird, nicht aber von den beiden Frauen. Und nur von den beiden weiblichen Heroinen wird berichtet, daß ihnen jeweils ein Chor gewidmet ist. Pausanias versäumt nicht, die hohe Position dieser Frauen zu Lebzeiten ausdrücklich zu unterstreichen: Beide sind durch ihre männlichen Liebespartner besonders ausgezeichnet, Hippodameia durch Pelops, den eponymen Heros der Peloponnes, Physkoa durch Dionysos, und beide haben den weiblichen Lebenszyklus auf exorbitante Weise erfüllt, sind Heroen- bzw. Götter-Gattinnen und Mütter geworden. Vieles spricht dafür, daß der Wortlaut der ihnen zukommenden Chorlieder von eben diesem ehrenvollen Schicksal erzählte. Im Unterschied dazu bezieht sich die ekstatische Klage um

---

[40] Diese Plutarch-Stelle (*Mor.* 364E–365A) wurde von manchen Interpreten als Indiz dafür gewertet, daß das Kultlied der elischen Frauen mit dem Tod des Dionysos zu tun hat; siehe z. B. (besonders emphatisch) Otto 1933, 175.

Achilleus offenbar nur auf seinen tragischen Tod. Eine solche Klage aber fehlt dem Hymnos auf Dionysos vollkommen. Ob dennoch auch hier die Schicksale des Dionysos angedeutet sind, muß vorerst noch offenbleiben.

Was den Schauplatz des Totenkultes für Achilleus und Hippodameia betrifft, so fällt auf, daß er bei Pausanias topographisch äußerst genau festgelegt ist. Hippodameia erhält den Kult in ihrem Heiligtum in Olympia, dem Hippodamion,[41] einem großen, von einer Steinmauer umgebenen Platz in der Altis, dem heiligen Hain des Zeus, direkt am Festeingang, und Achilleus an seinem in der Stadt Elis (an der Schwelle zwischen Gymnasion und Agora) aufgerichteten Grabbau.[42] Um so merkwürdiger mutet es an, daß Pausanias über den genauen Schauplatz des Totenkultes für Physkoa nichts verlauten läßt, und ebensowenig über den Ort oder die Orte, wo die Chöre für Hippodameia und für Physkoa aufgeführt wurden. Im Falle der Hippodameia mag es naheliegen, daß sie, die große Heroine von Olympia, dort nicht nur mit ihrem eindeutig lokalisierten Totenkult, sondern auch mit ihrem Chor gefeiert wurde. Was Physkoa betrifft, so wäre es möglich, daß aus Pausanias' Nennung ihres Herkunftsdorfes Orthia in dem am Meer gelegenen elischen Flachland auch auf den Ort geschlossen werden könnte, an dem sie Totenkult und Chorreigen empfing. Dies läßt sich jedoch nicht nachweisen, und vielleicht ist gerade Pausanias' mangelnde Präzision in diesem Punkt ein Warnsignal, das eine genaue Lokalisierung verhüten soll oder sogar auf geheime und den Frauen reservierte Riten verweist.

Vor diesem Hintergrund ist die in dem elischen Dionysos-Hymnos artikulierte topographische Bestimmung besonders bezeichnend. Denn sie ist, anders als die eben genannten Ortsbestimmungen, nicht einfach präzise oder einfach unpräzise, sondern sie ist genau und ungenau zugleich. Schauplatz der vom Hymnos beschworenen Aktion ist 'der Tempel am Meer',[43] also irgendwo an der Westküste der Peloponnes im Land der Eleer. Nichts weiter verrät der Hymnos über die Lage des Tempels, kein topographischer Name hilft weiter, und auch die Archäologie läßt uns wie gesagt bisher im Stich. Diese Angabe, so ungenau sie ist, enthält jedoch ex negativo eine durchaus präzise Bestimmung, denn sie schließt aus, daß der Tempel sich in der Stadt Elis oder in ihrer unmittelbaren Nähe befindet. In Pausanias' Beschreibung von Elis sucht man nun zwar nach einem am Meer gelegenen Tempel des Dionysos umsonst,[44] doch wäre hierfür vielleicht eine andere Überlieferung heranzuziehen: Der einzige mir bekannte Hinweis darauf, daß Dionysos möglicherweise in der Landschaft Elis am Meer verehrt wurde, stammt aus dem 1. Homerischen Hymnos an Dionysos, wo zu Beginn verschiedene konkurrierende Lokalisierungen der Dionysos-Geburt durchgespielt werden und wo unter den abgewiesenen Ortsbestimmungen auch die tief strudelnde Alpheios-Mündung erscheint.[45] Doch auch wenn hier ein Dionysos-Tempel gelegen haben könnte,[46] läßt sich keineswegs mit

---

[41] Lage des Hippodamions in Olympia: Pausanias, VI, 20.7. Die genaue Lokalisierung dieses Heiligtums ist bisher archäologisch unsicher und umstritten.

[42] Pausanias, VI, 23.3; Lage des Achilleus-Grabbaus in der Stadt Elis: VI, 24.1.

[43] Solche direkt am Meer gelegenen Tempel sind auch im Kult anderer Gottheiten bezeugt. Zu den bekanntesten und archäologisch am besten erforschten gehört das Hera-Heiligtum von Perachora; siehe dazu Morgan 1994. Vgl. auch das Heiligtum der Lesbier für Zeus, Hera und Dionysos, Alkaios LP fr. 129.

---

[44] Vgl. oben, Anm. 22. Für andere Orte (vor allem auf der Peloponnes) bezeugt Pausanias mehrfach eine enge kultische Beziehung zwischen der Dionysos-Verehrung (besonders durch Frauen) und dem Meer: Brasiai in Lakonien (Pausanias III, 24.3–4), der Ort, wo der ins Meer ausgesetzte Säugling Dionysos mit seiner toten Mutter Semele in einem Kasten an Land gespült worden sei, mit einer Grotte, in der Ino Dionysos aufgezogen habe; Kyparissiai in Messenien (IV, 36.7), südlich davon am Meer die Quelle Dionysias, die der Gott selbst mit seinem Thyrsos hervorgebracht habe; Argos (II, 20.4; 22.1), der Heroinenkult an den Gräbern der 'Meerfrauen' (Haliai), die mit Dionysos vom Meer gekommen seien, um gegen die Argiver und Perseus zu kämpfen (besonders würdigen Kult besaß unter diesen Frauen die μαινάς Choreia, deren sprechender Name sicherlich auch auf Chortänze zu ihren Ehren verweist); Tanagra in Boiotien (IX, 20.4–5), zwei alternative Sagen: 1) Frauen seien einst vor ihren Orgia zur Reinigung ins Meer gegangen, und Dionysos kam ihnen gegen das Meeresungeheuer Triton zu Hilfe, 2) der Triton habe zum Meer getriebene Rinderherden überfallen, sei aber durch Wein überlistet worden, so daß er getötet werden konnte; beide Sagen wurden bisher, so weit ich sehe, noch nicht zum Verständnis des elischen Kultliedes herangezogen. Vgl. allgemein Thomson ^{4}1973, 135: 'the bathing of the women in the cult of Dionysus might be a rite either of initiation or of marriage. Probably it was both. The initiates of the *thíasos* were brides of Dionysus.'—Zum Meeres-Dionysos vgl. Maass 1888; Tümpel 1889; Daraki 1982 und 1985, 31–44 und 108 mit 243–247; Graf 1985, 387; zu den Haliai: Burkert 1972, 197 n.33; Larson 1995, 113; Lyons 1997, 127. Siehe auch, zu einem Lyrik-Fragment aus der Berliner Papyrussammlung (*P. Berol.* 13270 = *PMG* 917), Bravo 1997, 43–99, vor allem 94f. (gedeutet als symposiastischer Dithyrambos auf den aus dem Meer kommenden Dionysos).

[45] *Hom. Hymn.* 1, 3; die Überlieferung ebenso bei Diodor III, 66 (mit Rekurs auf den Hymnos). Eine besondere Verbindung des Dionysos zum Alpheios legt auch Theopomp nahe (bei Athenaios I, 61 [34a]), der berichtet, daß die Weinrebe am Alpheios in Olympia 'entdeckt' worden sei (εὑρεθῆναι). Vgl. dazu Kerényi 1959. Siehe auch unten, Anm. 70.

[46] An der Alpheios-Mündung lag ein Artemis-Heiligtum: Strabon VIII, 3.12 C 343 (das schließt natürlich nicht aus, daß sich dort auch ein Dionysos-Tempel befand; Belege dafür existieren meines Wissens bisher nicht). Alpheiaia als Kulttitel

Gewißheit behaupten, daß dort der Aufführungsort des Hymnos der elischen Frauen war.

Bevor jetzt dieser von Plutarch zitierte Dionysos-Hymnos genauer betrachtet werden kann, lassen sich erste Zwischenergebnisse der bisherigen kritischen Analyse festhalten.

1. Plutarchs Angabe, daß 'die elischen Frauen' diesen Hymnos singen, ist à la lettre zu verstehen; die communis opinio, daß die Sängerinnen mit dem Kollegium der 16 Frauen von Elis identisch sind, läßt sich nicht aufrechterhalten.
2. Auch die Ortsangabe im Hymnos ('Tempel am Meer') ist wörtlich zu nehmen; die Konjektur 'Tempel der Eleer' ist nicht gerechtfertigt.
3. Anhand von Pausanias' Angaben über den Dionysos-Kult von Elis kann der Hymnos weder zeitlich noch örtlich lokalisiert werden; gegen die communis opinio ist jedoch auf der Grundlage von Plutarchs unemendiertem Text auszuschließen, daß der Hymnos in der Stadt Elis oder in ihrer Nähe aufgeführt wurde.
4. Plutarchs Angaben implizieren, daß sich Frauen von Elis aus allen Teilen des Landes in jenem Tempel am Meer versammelten, um den Dionysos-Hymnos zu singen; dies korrespondiert mit der von Pausanias mehrfach notierten ausgeprägten kultischen Reiseaktivität der elischen Frauen, die sowohl in Olympia als auch in der weit davon entfernten Stadt Elis (und im übrigen ebenso auf dem Weg zwischen beiden Orten) eine Fülle von rituellen Handlungen zu vollziehen hatten.
5. Die kultischen Aktivitäten der Frauen von Elis im Götterkult konzentrierten sich nach Pausanias auf zwei Gottheiten, auf Hera und Dionysos, wobei die Verehrung der Hera insbesondere in Olympia lokalisiert war, die Verehrung des Dionysos durch die Frauen jedoch topographisch unbestimmt bleibt, auch in der einzigen genaueren Bestimmung 'Tempel am Meer', die nur bei Plutarch überliefert ist.
6. Darüber hinaus, aber zugleich darauf bezogen, hatten nach Pausanias die Frauen von Elis wichtige kultische Aktivitäten im Heroenkult auszuüben. Die verehrten Heroen und Heroinen weisen dabei Besonderheiten auf, die für Elis spezifisch sind. Im Zentrum

---

der Artemis: Pausanias VI, 22.8–10 (im elischen Letrinoi); gemeinsamer Altar der Artemis und des Alpheios in Olympia: Pausanias V, 14.6. Vgl. dazu Nilsson 1906, 214–216. Zum Alpheios vgl. Anm. 45 und 70.

der elischen Heroenverehrung standen der Kult für Hippodameia, der der Hera von Olympia zugeordnet war, und der Kult für Physkoa, einer dem Dionysos assoziierten Heroine; letzterer ist noch weniger topographisch präzisiert als der ihres Geliebten, des Gottes. Die Kulte für die beiden männlichen Heroen wiederum sind relativ klar lokalisiert und voneinander abgegrenzt: Achill wird nach dem Zeugnis von Pausanias an seinem leeren Grab in der Stadt Elis mit Klageriten gefeiert, Dionysos nach dem Zeugnis von Plutarch in seinem Tempel am Meer hymnisch verehrt und zur Erscheinung gerufen.

Der im Hymnos genannte Dionysos-Tempel besitzt nun eine auffallend exzentrische Lage. Der Hymnos erlaubt aber nicht allein, auf eine weitere kultische Reiseaktivität zu schließen, die den Frauen von Elis offenbar auch im Dionysos-Dienst—ähnlich wie im Hera-Dienst und im Heroenkult für Hippodameia, Physkoa und Achill—auferlegt war. Denn der Hymnos enthält noch zumindest eine weitere Angabe, die möglicherweise das Verhältnis zwischen dem so exzentrisch am Meer gelegenen Tempel des Dionysos und den Heiligtümern innerhalb von Olympia und Elis bzw. in unmittelbarer Umgebung der Stadt erhellen kann. Dionysos, so heißt es im Hymnos, soll 'mit den Chariten' kommen.

Diese Angabe hat viele Interpreten darin bestärkt, mit Hilfe von Pausanias den Schauplatz des von Plutarch zitierten Hymnos und seine Position im Festzyklus exakt in der Stadt Elis bzw. in ihrer Nähe zu lokalisieren. Aber auch Olympia bietet sich an: Was die kultische Verbindung zwischen Dionysos und den Chariten betrifft, so ist sie dem Zeugnis des Pausanias zufolge in Olympia tatsächlich besonders eng, denn dort besitzen alle diese Gottheiten einen zentral gelegenen gemeinsamen Altar, der neben dem Heiligtum des Pelops liegt.[47] In der Stadt Elis wiederum ist neben dem auf der Agora gelegenen Heiligtum der Chariten ein Tempel (ναός) des Silen erbaut, wobei Pausanias die für ihn merkwürdige Tatsache hervorhebt, daß der Silen hier nicht mit Dionysos gemeinsam verehrt wird und daß Silene sterbliche Wesen sind. Auffällig, wenn auch bisher unbeachtet geblieben, ist dabei, daß der sterbliche Silen in Elis über einen Tempel verfügt, wie sonst nur unsterbliche Götter, wie aber auch der elische 'Heros Dionysos' des Hymnos.[48] Angesichts von Pausanias'

---

[47] Altar des Dionysos und der Chariten in Olympia: Pausanias V, 14.9.

[48] Tempel des Silen in der Stadt Elis: Pausanias VI, 24.8. Zu den weiteren lokalen Besonderheiten der elischen Kulte gehört die Errichtung eines Heiligtums für

Informationen über die elische Kultgemeinschaft von Dionysos mit den Chariten lag es nahe, den Platz für die Aufführung des Hymnos den entsprechenden Kultorten zuzuordnen, wobei sich nur die Schwierigkeit ergibt, daß keine Entscheidung darüber möglich ist, ob der Hymnos nur im gemeinsamen Heiligtum der Chariten und des Dionysos in Olympia oder auch bzw. nur im Heiligtum der Chariten in Elis gesungen wurde, zumal ja, wie gesagt, Pausanias über diesen Hymnos der elischen Frauen und die in ihm explizierte Aufforderung an Dionysos, er solle 'gemeinsam mit den Chariten' kommen, kein Wort verlauten läßt.

Aber auch unabhängig vom Schweigen des Pausanias über den Hymnos spricht nichts dafür, daß der Hymnos wirklich in Olympia oder in bzw. bei der Stadt Elis zur Aufführung kam.[49] Dennoch können Pausanias' Ausführungen zur besonders engen Verbindung zwischen den Chariten und Dionysos bzw. einer sterblichen männlichen Figur seines Thiasos vielleicht den Weg zum Verständnis des Hymnos und seiner politisch-kultischen Funktion weisen, wenn auch anders, als man es sich bisher vorgestellt hat. Denn eben diese enge Verbindung zwischen Dionysos und den Chariten wird ja auch vom Hymnos vorausgesetzt.[50] Da jedoch eine topographische Identität der Heiligtümer

---

Athena mit der Epiklese Μήτηρ (Pausanias V, 3.2). Zur Doppelheit von Heros und Gott im Kult der Ino-Leukothea (einer gerade für den peloponnesischen Kult wichtigen Figur aus dem Umkreis des Dionysos, vgl. oben, Anm. 44) siehe Xenophanes (DK 21 A 13 = Aristoteles, *Rhet.* II, 26. 1400b 5) in seiner Antwort an die Leute von Elea (nicht von Elis, wie Lyons 1997, 49 irrtümlich behauptet); zu Ino siehe auch Lyons 1997, 122–124.

[49] Weniger (1883) 12, der annimmt, daß der Hymnos in der bei Pausanias als Schauplatz des Weinwunders angegebenen 'Dionysoskapelle' (οἴκημα) in der Nähe der Stadt Elis aufgeführt wurde, betont, daß deshalb die Konjektur Ἀλείων in Plutarchs Text notwendig sei. Preisendanz 1936, 684, der die Konjektur ebenfalls übernimmt, spricht sich dagegen aus, das οἴκημα mit dem ναός zu identifizieren und verlegt den Hymnos in den Dionysostempel der Stadt Elis; vgl. auch Detienne 1986, 82. Ebenfalls auf der Basis der Konjektur und gestützt auf den Fund eines Stierschädels aus vorklassischer Zeit unter dem Fußboden der Orchestra des Dionysostheaters der Stadt Elis hält Mitsopoulos-Leon 1984, 290 das Theater bzw. das damit räumlich verbundene Dionysos-Heiligtum der Stadt für den Aufführungsort des Hymnos.

[50] Dies legt auch die wichtigste Parallelstelle nahe, Pindar, *Ol.* 13, 18f.: ταὶ Διωνύσου πόθεν ἐξέφανεν / σὺν βοηλάτᾳ χάριτες διθυράμβῳ; (von vielen Autoren zur Interpretation des elischen Kulthymnos herangezogen). Alle hier genannten Elemente (Dionysos, die Epiphanie, die Chariten, das Rind) finden sich im elischen Kulthymnos wieder (zum Dithyrambos vgl. oben, Anm. 12; zu den Chariten: unten, Anm. 75). Undeutlich bleibt, in welchem Sinne der Dithyrambos als βοηλάτης bezeichnet wird ('ochsentreibend' bzw. 'rindtreibend'). Bezeichnend ist auch hier

im Landesinneren mit dem im Hymnos genannten Tempel nach dem Zeugnis von Plutarchs Text ausgeschlossen ist, kann vielmehr angenommen werden, daß die Heiligtümer der Chariten und des Dionysos (bzw. des Silen) in den Zentren Olympia und Elis kultisch mit dem Meerestempel des Dionysos in Beziehung gesetzt wurden, etwa durch eine mehrtägige Prozession, jedenfalls durch kultisch motivierte Reisen. Eine ähnliche kultische Verbindung zwischen Zentrum und Peripherie ist auch anderswo bezeugt; hier soll nur an die ausgiebig untersuchte kultische Konstellation in einer anderen Gegend der Peloponnes, zwischen Argos und dem argivischen Hera-Heiligtum, erinnert werden.[51]

Eine weitere kultische Verbindung zwischen einem städtischen und einem ländlichen Kult läßt sich vielleicht auch aus Pausanias' Auskunft zum Dionysos-Kult der Eleer ableiten, die also durchaus, wenn auch anders als es die communis opinio will, mit dem bei Plutarch überlieferten Dionysos-Hymnos in Beziehung gesetzt werden kann. Die von Pausanias bezeugte Epiphanie des Dionysos durch das beim Fest der Thyia in einem Gemeinschaftsgebäude vor der Stadt von männlichen Priestern (ἱερεῖς) zelebrierte Weinwunder ist zwar offensichtlich nicht gleichzusetzen mit der im Hymnos von den Frauen erflehten Epiphanie des Gottes als Stier (und eben nicht in Form von Wein) in seinem Tempel am Meer. Beide Epiphanien scheinen vielmehr—gerade durch ihre Differenzen—aufeinander zu verweisen, woraus sich folgendes Bild kultischer Praxis ergibt: Dem einfachen Gebäude (οἴκημα) in der Nähe der Stadt entspricht der zweifellos eindrucksvollere Tempel (ναός)[52] am Meer. Der Epiphanie des Dionysos 'mit dem Ochsenfuß' hier korrespondiert seine Epiphanie in Form von Wein dort.[53] Der Beschränkung der Kultausübenden auf eine kleine

---

(wie bei βοέῳ ποδί im elischen Kulthymnos), daß von einem Stier keine Rede ist; die Interpreten und die Pindar-Übersetzer tragen dem ebenso selten Rechnung wie die Interpreten und Übersetzer des Kultliedes der elischen Frauen.

[51] Vgl. dazu Polignac 1995, vor allem 40f.; zu weiteren kultisch motivierten Reiseaktivitäten siehe Schlesier 2000. Zum kultisch-topographischen Verhältnis von Zentrum und Peripherie in der antiken Polis vgl. Hölscher 1998, vor allem 46–62, 67–73.

[52] Zur Wortgeschichte von ναός als Wohnung einer Gottheit: Casevitz 1984; zur Geschichte der Tempelfunktion: Burkert 1988.

[53] Eine vergleichbare Parallelaktion ist auch aus Aigai auf Euboia (bzw. Aigai in Achaia) überliefert, Euphorion fr. 100 Powell; siehe auch Radt ad Sophokles fr. 255 TrGF. Vgl. dazu Detienne 1986 (b), 64: 'à Aigai, les rameaux de la vigne se déploient et se couvrent de fruits en même temps que les femmes évoluent en chœur

Gruppe von Männern mit offiziellen religiösen Funktionen ('Priester') nahe bei der Stadt entspricht die Beschränkung der Kultausübenden auf das weibliche Geschlecht sowie ihre Ausweitung auf die quantitativ unspezifizierte und religiös nicht funktional begrenzte Gruppe der 'Frauen der Eleer'.

Zugleich wirkt es so, als würden die beiden unterschiedlich ausgeprägten Landschaften im Kult miteinander verkoppelt, ohne ihre Eigenständigkeit zu verlieren: Das von den männlichen Priestern betreute Weinwunder findet in ländlichem Ambiente bei der Stadt Elis statt, also in eben der Gegend, in der die fruchtbaren Wiesen und Weiden des elischen Flachlandes in eine Hügellandschaft mit Weinbau übergehen. Die Epiphanie des Rind-Dionysos inmitten der elischen Frauen hingegen erfolgt am Meer—oder aus dem Meer—in der feuchten, von Lagunen durchzogenen Landschaft, die die gesamte Küste von Elis dominiert[54] und in der seit alters her eine besonders ertragreiche Agrarwirtschaft mit riesigen Rinderherden betrieben wurde.[55]

Falls die Lesart θύων im Hymnos handschriftlich gesichert ist,[56] würde es sich außerdem in beiden Fällen ausdrücklich um einen religiösen Anlaß handeln, der mit Raserei zu tun hat: Nach der dionysischen Raserei trägt das Fest den Namen Thyia, und mit einem

---

et célèbrent les cérémonies annuelles de Dionysos. Le vin pur de ce jour jaillit en même temps que la danse agitée des Ménades, le chœur des femmes mariées qui sont ses initiées (*mustides*).'

[54] Zur Geographie von Elis vgl. Philippson 1905; Philippson / Kirsten 1959, 319–349. Über die mögliche Lage eines Dionysostempels am Meer läßt sich bisher nur spekulieren (vgl. oben, Anm. 22). Ein wichtiger Küstenort war sicher Kyllene, dessen genaue Lage allerdings immer noch ungewiß ist (siehe oben, Anm. 25). Der Hafen war zweifellos älter als die erst im 5. Jh. v. Chr. gegründete, nie ummauerte Stadt Elis. Doch es ist nicht zwingend, daß der Dionysostempel des Hymnos in Kyllene gelegen hat. Die der Stadt Elis unmittelbar westlich vorgelagerte, ca. 25 km entfernte Küste umfaßt eine kleine Halbinsel, die größtenteils durch das Vorgebirge Chelonatas (die heutige Hügelmasse von Chlemutsi) eingenommen wird. Funde in diesem Gebiet aus helladischer Zeit bezeugen frühe Besiedelung; vgl. Servais 1964, der hier das homerische Hyrmine vermutet. An der Südseite des Vorgebirges liegen in der Nähe des Meeres warme Schwefelquellen (heute Lutra Killini). Vielleicht wäre der Dionysostempel an der dortigen Küste zu lokalisieren. Aufgrund der unmittelbaren Nachbarschaft des Vorgebirges Chelonatas, der einzigen Erhebung im elischen Flachland, stünde hier auch eine (sonst für Frauenriten im Dionysoskult besonders wichtige) Berg- bzw. Hügellandschaft zur Verfügung, die von den bisherigen Interpreten (vermutlich aufgrund mangelnder Ortskennnis) oft vermißt wurde; vgl. z. B. Nilsson 1906, 291. Grotten oder Höhlen an der Meeresküste existieren meines Wissens in Elis nicht (vgl. oben, Anm. 7).

[55] Zum berühmten Rinderreichtum der Eleer siehe Xenophon, *HG* III, 2.26.

[56] Siehe oben, Anm. 4.

wörtlichen Verweis darauf, nämlich durch das Verbum 'rasen' (θύειν), wäre auch das Erscheinen des Dionysos in seinem Tempel am Meer spezifiziert. In diesem Fall könnte angenommen werden, daß die den Dionysos feiernden Frauen dort selber 'rasen', ihm also nicht allein durch hymnischen Gesang, sondern auch durch wilde Tänze[57] huldigen und sich mit ihm dadurch vereinen, daß sie zu Thyiaden (oder zu Thyiai) werden, wie Dionysos zum 'rasenden Gott'.[58] Der Monatsname 'Thyios'[59] aber, der auch in anderen Gegenden Griechenlands anzutreffen ist, erlaubt vielleicht, die jahreszeitliche Position des Festes zu bestimmen. Demnach hätte es jeweils im Mai, also zu Beginn des mediterranen Sommers, stattgefunden.

Was ergäbe sich aber aus der Lesart δύων? Die Verbindung des elischen Kulthymnos mit den Angaben bei Pausanias zum Dionysoskult der Eleer wäre noch komplexer, als sie ohnehin schon ist. Das 'Tauchen' des Heros Dionysos mit dem Ochsenfuß in den 'salzflutigen' Tempel läßt sprachlich und semantisch eine bisher fast unbeachtete[60] Beziehung zu der homerischen Textstelle erkennen, an der in der Überlieferung Dionysos zum ersten Mal bezeugt ist.[61] Der 'rasende' (μαινόμενος) Dionysos 'taucht' dort 'hinab unter die Woge der Salzflut' (δύσεθ' ἁλὸς κατὰ κῦμα) und sucht Schutz unter dem Busen der Göttin Thetis, nachdem er gemeinsam mit seinen θύσθλα tragenden Ammen durch den 'mit einem Ochsenstachel' (βουπλῆγι) schlagenden Lykourgos bedroht worden war.

---

[57] Betont von Scullion (im Druck) mit Eitrem 1915, 92f.

[58] Vgl. dazu Henrichs 1994.

[59] Zum Thyios (in Elis, Thessalien, Malis und Achaia Phthiotis, Boiotien) siehe Trümpy 1997, 199f., 216–218, 230, 244f. (jahreszeitliche Stellung: Frühsommermonat). Der elische Kulthymnos im Monat Thyios: so Weniger 1883, 14f.; Nilsson 1906, 293; Preisendanz 1922, und 1936, 684; die von diesen Interpreten (vor allem aufgrund der Analogisierung der elischen Thyiai mit den delphischen Thyiaden) favorisierte Bestimmung des Thyios als Wintermonat, in den das elische Thyia-Fest demnach falle, läßt sich nicht aufrechterhalten. Wilamowitz ^{3}1959, 72 versicherte, daß die elischen 16 'θυιάδες geheißen haben müssen'; Rapp 1872, 10 trieb die Analogisierung sogar so weit, daß er einen trieterischen Rhythmus des elischen Thyia-Festes für gewiß hielt. Frühling als Zeitpunkt des elischen Kulthymnos: Dieterich 1903, 127; die von Harrison und Halliday übernommene Konjektur von Cook sollte den Frühling in den Hymnos selbst verlagern (vgl. oben, Anm. 18). Zu den delphischen Thyiaden vgl. Villanueva Puig 1986. Die Wortform Θυῖαι (ohne lokale Zuordnung, in einer Aufzählung einiger für die Dionysos-Verehrung relevanter Kultnamen) überliefert Strabon X, 3.10 C 468.

[60] Vgl. aber Scullion (im Druck), der jedoch davon ausgeht, daß θύων die Überlieferung ist.

[61] Homer, *Il.* 6, 130–140. Vgl. dazu Privitera 1970, 53–84; Henrichs 1994, 41–47.

Im Kultlied der elischen Frauen sind eine Reihe von Elementen versammelt, die auch an der viel interpretierten und immer noch rätselhaften Homer-Stelle zu finden sind: die besondere Beziehung der Frauen zu Dionysos, die Assoziation des Gottes mit einem Ochsen—durch einen zu einem Ochsen gehörigen Gegenstand bzw. Körperteil (jeweils im instrumentalen Dativ)—, dazu noch das Meer und das Tauchen. Keine Rede jedoch ist hier von einem wie auch immer gearteten Eingreifen eines Mannes. Wenn die Lesart δύων tatsächlich richtig ist, würde im Text des Hymnos das Rasen des Gottes ebenfalls fehlen. Gemeinsam ist der Homer-Stelle und dem Kultlied der elischen Frauen, daß eine der traditionell wichtigsten Qualitäten des Dionysos, seine Bestimmung als Weingott, unerwähnt bleibt. Zum Verständnis der Bedeutung des elischen Hymnos und seines kultischen Kontextes kann die Homer-Stelle vielleicht auch dadurch beitragen, daß nach ihrem Zeugnis der Gott eine Katabasis unternimmt, die eine Beziehung zum Tod und zur Sterblichkeit anklingen läßt. Die Frage, ob dies ebenso im elischen Dionysostempel am Meer bei der kultischen Aufführung des Hymnos repräsentiert war und ob darauf die Anrede des Gottes als Heros verweist, drängt sich zwar auf, läßt sich jedoch auch mit Hilfe der Homer-Stelle keineswegs klar beantworten.[62] Allenfalls der Kontext, in dem Plutarch in seiner Schrift *Über Isis und Osiris* den Kulthymnos verkürzt zitiert,[63] weist möglicherweise in diese Richtung.

Es ist nun nicht von der Hand zu weisen, daß die hervorragendsten rituellen Handlungen des elischen Dionysoskultes, einerseits die der männlichen Priester und andererseits die der Frauen, simultan stattgefunden haben können, und zwar möglicherweise tatsächlich während des Festes der Thyia, jedoch nicht, wie allgemein vermutet wird, am selben Platz, sondern an zwei verschiedenen, erheblich voneinander entfernten Orten. Eine entsprechende Gleichzeitigkeit verschiedener, aufeinander verweisender ritueller Handlungen von Männern und Frauen an zwei getrennten Lokalitäten ist anderswo bezeugt, und dies gerade im Dionysos-Kult, dem von Delphi. Darüber berichtet Plutarch,[64] und zwar in eben dem Zusammenhang, in dem er kurz zuvor kursorisch auf den Hymnos der Frauen von Elis verwiesen hat. In Delphi, so schreibt er, vollziehen geweihte Priester (ὅσιοι) im Apollontempel geheime Opfer am Grab des Dionysos, während (in den Bergen?) die rasenden Frauen des Dionysos (Thyiaden) den in der Wiege liegenden Dionysos (Liknites) erwecken.

---

[62] Vielmehr stellt sich die weitere Frage, ob in diesem Fall sowohl die Homer-Stelle als auch der Hymnos der elischen Frauen auf orgiastische Geheimriten mit ähnlichen Implikationen im Rahmen von Dionysos-Mysterien verweisen. Auffällig ist die Hapax-Häufigkeit: βουπλήξ und θύσθλα bei Homer, der Vokativ ἥρω im elischen Kultlied, noch dazu für einen Gott.

[63] Vgl. oben, Anm. 40.

Für das Verständnis des elischen Dionysos-Hymnos ist diese Angabe bei Plutarch gerade durch diejenigen Elemente instruktiv, mit denen sie von der Terminologie des Hymnos abweicht. Während im delphischen Kult die Männer im Haupttheiligtum der Stadt, dem Apollon-Tempel, agieren, sind sie im elischen Kult an einem peripheren Kultort in der Nähe des Zentrums—ausdrücklich keinem Tempel—tätig. Im elischen Kult ist der Tempel den Frauen reserviert, doch er liegt an der äußersten Peripherie in der feuchten Landschaft eines Konfiniums von Lagunen, Flußmündungen, Wiesen und Meer, vielleicht auch nahe von Hügeln und Quellen.[65] Und hier ist es der Tempel, der als kultisch rein (ἁγνός) bezeichnet wird, nicht die kultausübenden Frauen selbst, während es in Delphi die männlichen Kultpraktikanten sind, denen mit dem Terminus technicus ὅσιοι eine andere Art von kultischer Reinheit und Heiligkeit attestiert wird.[66] Vor allem aber: der elische Hymnos läßt über den Tod des Dionysos nichts verlauten, sondern betont vielmehr den für ihn spezifischen Heroenstatus, der vielleicht die Sterblichkeit, vor allem aber göttliche Ehren impliziert und gerade die Lebenskraft des Dionysos voraussetzt. Der Gott ist hier auch nicht als Kind in der Wiege gedacht, das erweckt werden müßte, sondern als ausgewachsenes männliches Wesen. Er erscheint triumphal am sandigen Meeresstrand, wie der Jüngling Dionysos des homerischen Hymnos.[67] Ja, der Gott wird nicht einmal in menschenförmiger Gestalt herbeigerufen, sondern als dasjenige Tier, das nach antiker griechischer Auffassung Stärke, Wildheit und sexuelle Potenz in allerhöchstem Maße verkörpert, der

---

[64] Plutarch, *Mor.* 365A.

[65] Vgl. oben, Anm. 54.

[66] Zu ὅσιος siehe Rudhardt ^{2}1992, 30–36 (mit Ergänzungen in der unpaginierten Einleitung zur 2. Auflage); Burkert 1977, 404.

[67] *Hom. Hymn.* 7, 2: ὡς ἐφάνη παρὰ ἀλός.

Stier:[68] In der wiederholten Anrufung 'würdiger Stier'[69] kulminiert der Hymnos.

Was hat es aber nun mit dem Fuß auf sich, der nach ausdrücklichem Wunsch der elischen Frauen die Erscheinung des Gottes begleiten soll? Erstaunlicherweise geht im Unterschied zu Plutarch in seinen *Griechischen Fragen* die überwältigende Mehrheit der Interpreten davon aus, daß der Gott 'mit dem Stierfuß' erscheinen soll. Hier scheint jedoch eine seltsame Deutung oder gar ein Mißverständnis des griechischen Wortlauts vorzuliegen. Im Text heißt es τῶι βοέωι ποδί. Aus diesem Wortlaut läßt sich nun keineswegs unzweideutig ableiten, daß ein Stierfuß gemeint ist. Das Adjektiv βόεος bezieht sich im griechischen Sprachgebrauch allgemein auf das Rind, unabhängig davon, ob weiblichen oder männlichen Geschlechts, und im engeren Sinne auf den Ochsen. Käme es in dem Kulthymnos tatsächlich darauf an, die Zugehörigkeit des Fußes zu einem Stier in eindeutig bestimmter Weise auszudrücken, so hätte ja ein anderes Adjektiv zur Verfügung gestanden (ταύρειος), das seit dem attischen Drama bezeugt ist.[70] Gerade die Unbestimmtheit des Adjektivs aber ist signifikant. Die Qualität des Fußes, mit dem Dionysos erscheinen soll, verweist deutlich genug auf einen problematischen Status der Geschlechtszugehörigkeit. Der als βόεος designierte Fuß kann zwar lexikalisch auch der Fuß eines Stieres sein, mindestens ebensogut aber der einer Kuh oder der eines Ochsen. Aus Plutarchs Erklärung in den *Griechischen Fragen*[71] geht nun eindeutig hervor, daß nur der 'Ochsenfuß' gemeint sein kann (τοῦ βοὸς ὁ πούς). Seine Feststellung jedoch, daß der Fuß des Ochsen 'harmlos' (ἀβλαβῆς) sei und das Erscheinen des Gottes mit ihm deshalb 'sanft' (πρᾶος) und 'schmerzlos' (ἄλυπος) wäre, wirkt so, als ob dieser Fuß hier metonymisch auf etwas anderes verweist. Die Möglichkeit einer Kastration des Dionysos scheint in der Wortwahl andeutungsweise mitzuschwingen.[72]

---

[68] Zur Beziehung des Dionysos zum Stier vgl. Curtius 1882; Farnell 1909, 97, 126; Nilsson ^{3}1967, 571; Otto 1933, 150–152 (mit Bezug auf 'das Element der Feuchte', einschließlich der Zeugungskraft); Grégoire 1949; zu Rind und Stier allgemein: Keller 1909, 329–372 mit 432f.; zum Stier, assoziiert vor allem mit Wasser und Meer: Bodson 1978, 144–151 (150 zum elischen Kulthymnos); siehe auch Georgoudi 1990. Die Anrufung des Dionysos als 'würdiger Stier' wird von Del Grande ^{2}1962, 26 und 342f. als Anspielung auf den Opferstier, nicht als Bezeichnung des Gottes selbst gedeutet; dies ist ebensowenig überzeugend wie seine grundsätzlichen Zweifel an den sonstigen Überlieferungen eines stiergestaltigen Dionysos; vgl. die Kritik von Untersteiner 1955, 73 n.6. Noch Seaford 1994, 268 n.146 vermutet, daß im Hymnos 'a bull in the sacrificial procession' gemeint sei; vgl. ebd. 321, mit Berufung auf Mitsopoulos-Leon 1984; ähnlich schon Thomson ^{4}1973, 157 (seine Annahme, 'Dionysus is here present both in his own person and in the bull', versucht eine Synthese verschiedener Zeugnisse). Ebenfalls ein Stieropfer, allerdings als orgiastischer Zerstückelungsakt, wird bei der Deutung des Hymnos von Preller ^{3}1872, 571 vermutet. Zur Verbindung zwischen dem Stier und Dionysos vgl. auch Anm. 69 und 74.

[69] Hiermit wurden oft zwei weitere Zeugnisse in Verbindung gebracht: Pausanias VIII, 19.2 (Männer tragen im arkadischen Kynaitha einen Opferstier zum Dionysosheiligtum), dazu z. B. Versnel 1990, 139; sowie eine athenische Inschrift (*IG* II^{2} 1006): ... ταῦρον ἄξιον τοῦ θεοῦ. Der 'würdige Stier' ist hier der Opferstier der Epheben für Dionysos bei den athenischen Dionysia; dazu z. B. Harrison 1912, 209. Daraus folgt jedoch nicht, daß im elischen Kulthymnos ebenfalls der Opferstier gemeint ist (vgl. Anm. 68 und 74). In diesen Beispielen sind die Akteure ausschließlich Männer. Andere (ebenfalls oft herangezogene) Parallelen, bei denen wie im elischen Kultlied die Frauen im Vordergrund stehen, sind zwingender: bei Euripides die Anrufung des Dionysos durch die lydischen Bakchen, als Stier zu erscheinen, *Ba.* 1017, und die Verwandlung des Dionysos in einen Stier, ebd. 618 (vgl. auch 920; 1159); so auch, bei Antoninus Liberalis 10, 2, Dionysos' Stier-Epiphanie vor den Minyaden (und zuvor: Angleichung des Dionysos an ein Mädchen). Eine weitere Beziehung besteht vermutlich zur 3. Zeile des Textes auf zwei seit 1987 bekannten thessalischen Goldblättchen aus dem Grab einer Mystin, Tsantsanoglou / Parássoglou 1987, 10: ταῦρος εἰς γάλα ἔθορες (erstes direktes Zeugnis für die Angleichung an den stiergestaltigen Gott im Rahmen von Dionysos-Mysterien).

Wie wesentlich für diesen Hymnos die sexuellen Untertöne sind, wird nicht allein an diesem Ausdruck deutlich. Gerade der den Hymnos abschließende Vokativ ταῦρε weist unmißverständlich in eine solche Richtung. Dabei braucht nicht erst auf späte Auskünfte, etwa bei Pollux oder im Suda-Lexikon, zurückgegriffen zu werden, bei denen das Wort ταῦρος als synonyme Bezeichnung für die männlichen und weiblichen Genitalien angegeben ist. Schon Aischylos und Aristophanes benutzen das Wort in sexuellem Sinne, der jedoch religiös nicht weiter expliziert wird: In Aischylos' *Agamemnon* ist die Jungfrau Iphigenie ἀταύρωτος, weil sie sich niemals mit einem Mann vereinigt hat, und in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* müssen die Athenerinnen beschwören, daß jede von ihnen vorerst keusch, ἀταυρώτη, bleiben und sich ihrem Ehepartner verweigern wird.[73]

Der Text des Hymnos der Frauen von Elis hingegen suggeriert die Herbeirufung eines männlichen Liebespartners.[74] Aber dieser soll am Ende niemand anders als der ausgewachsene Stier Dionysos höchstpersönlich sein, und nicht mehr der Ochse, sondern so, wie er sich nach seiner Restitution würdig präsentieren kann. Dieser übermenschliche ταῦρος nun, Tier und Heros, also der Sterblichkeit unterworfen, aber unsterblicher Gott zugleich, soll ihnen gerade nicht in seiner ungemilderten Wildheit erscheinen. Mit den Chariten[75] soll er kommen, mit denjenigen Göttinnen also, die vorzugsweise der Aphrodite assoziiert sind, denn sie sind es, denen auch die leidenschaftliche Liebesgöttin Sanftmut, Großzügigkeit und angenehme Umgangsformen verdankt. Und nicht die Frauen präsentieren sich dabei als kultisch rein, sondern nur der Tempel, anders als etwa die Gerarai Athens, die die Hochzeit des Dionysos mit der Basilinna im *boukoleion*, wörtlich: dem Rinderstall, vorbereiten, denn diese würdigen alten Frauen müssen beschwören, ἁγναί—und das heißt hier ausdrücklich: auch sexuell keusch—zu sein.[76] Bei der Wiederholung des Wortes für Tempel im Hymnos fehlt jedoch bezeichnenderweise die Bestimmung der kultischen Reinheit durch ein Adjektiv. Gemeinsam mit den Chariten, heißt es nur noch, soll Dionysos in den Tempel kommen. Und dabei ist nun, dank dem 'mit dem Ochsenfuß',[77] dem aufreizenden Tänzer,[78] dem Gott der Feuchte, für kultische Reinheit oder gar sexuelle Keuschheit nirgends mehr Raum.

---

[70] Vgl. vor allem Euripides, *Hel.* 1555: ταύρειος πούς. Siehe auch Euripides, *IA* 275: σῆμα ταυρόπουν (das den Fluß Alpheios bezeichnende, stierfüßige Emblem am Schiff des Nestor aus dem sandigen Pylos). Die Worte βοῦς und ταῦρος, im gleichen Atemzug genannt, bedeuten bei Aischylos, *Ag.* 1125f. (in Kassandras Rätselrede) die Frau und den Mann (nämlich Klytaimestra und Agamemnon): ἄπεχε τῆς βοὸς / τὸν ταῦρον.

[71] Plutarch, *Mor.* 299B, siehe oben.

[72] Eine der Hauptstellen, die auf die Kastration des Dionysos anspielen (in Analogie zu Osiris), steht in Plutarchs Schrift *Über Isis und Osiris* im Kontext der Erwähnung des elischen Kulthymnos, *Mor.* 364F.

[73] Aischylos, *Ag.* 245; Aristophanes, *Lys.* 217f. Zur Hesych-Glosse über die ταυρίνδα (phallisches Spiel bei den Leuten von Tarent) vgl. Nilsson 1906, 184.

---

[74] Vgl. Welcker 1860, 599: 'Die Weiber rufen ihn [i. e. Dionysos] um Ehesegen und Ehefreuden an'; noch expliziter Dieterich 1903, 127 (als ἱερὸς γάμος gedeutet): er vermutet hier βόες als Kultnamen der elischen 'Dionysosdienerinnen'; vgl. Dieterich 1911, 72; nach Grégoire 1949, 404 rufen die elischen Frauen den Stier-Dionysos mit 'beuglements de vaches'; siehe auch Kerényi 1976, 153f., mit Prott 1906, 88f. (θύειν als 'sexuelles Rasen'); vgl. Untersteiner 1955, 76 n.33, mit Hopfner 1941, 162 ('Stierfuß' gedeutet als 'Phallos des Gottes'). Gegen einen solchen Gedanken haben sich die meisten übrigen Forscher übereinstimmend verwahrt. Stattdessen wird den elischen Frauen lieber unterstellt, einen Opferstier zu rufen (siehe oben, Anm. 68). Doch warum würde der gemeinsam mit den Chariten kommen sollen? Zur sexuellen Qualität des Dionysos, insbesondere bei seinen Stier-Epiphanien, vgl. Daraki 1985, 101–109.

[75] Vgl. zur Funktion der Chariten (in Verbindung mit dem Kultlied der elischen Frauen): Müller ^{2}1844, 175; Welcker 1860, 599; Kerényi 1976, 153; zur Wasserbeziehung der Chariten: Ginouvès 1962, 388 mit n.10. Die Charis gehört aufs engste zu Dionysos, siehe z. B. Aristophanes, *Nu.* 311: Βρομία χάρις. Vgl. bereits Homer, *Il.* 14, 325: Dionysos als χάρμα βροτοῖσιν. Siehe auch Euripides, *Ba.* 402–416: die Sehnsüchte der lydischen Bakchen nach Landschaften, wo Aphrodite und die Eroten, die Chariten und Pothos wohnen; vgl. dazu Schlesier 1998, 63 und 67.

[76] Siehe oben, Anm. 29; vgl. Kerényi 1976, 243 (assoziiert mit dem elischen Kulthymnos). Zu geheimen Zeremonien der Gerarai im Limnaion, dem Dionysosheiligtum 'in den Sümpfen' (λίμνη: 'Sumpf', 'See', 'Lagune', 'Meeresbucht'), vor der Hochzeit zwischen Dionysos und der *basilinna*, vgl. Seaford 1994, 238.

[77] Zu einer anderen Form der Fuß-Verehrung siehe den Fund eines Paars tönerner Füße, etwa in einem mittelminoischen Tempel in Archanes auf Kreta: dazu Burkert 1997, 27 (gedeutet als symbolische Spur der Epiphanie einer Gottheit).

Wer könnte einen solchen Hymnos intoniert haben? Kaum die an Jahren ältesten Frauen von Elis, aber auch kaum die Jungfrauen. Durch das Zeugnis des Plutarch scheint sich vielmehr zu bestätigen, daß es auch in Elis[79] die fruchtbaren verheirateten Frauen waren, die von allen männlichen Göttern der Griechen dem Dionysos im höchsten Maße zugetan waren.[80] Ist es ein Wunder?[81]

---

[78] Vgl. die Betonung der Schnelligkeit und des Eifers (ja der 'Begier') der Füße, vor allem beim Tanzen zu Ehren der Götter, z. B. Aristophanes, *Th.* 957: βαῖνε καρπαλίμοιν ποδοῖν. Siehe auch die 6. Zeile eines (inzwischen als Zeugnis für Dionysos-Mysterien erkannten) süditalischen Goldblättchens bei Zuntz 1971, 300f. (= Zuntz A 1): ἱμερτοῦ δ' ἐπέβαν στεφάνου ποσὶ καρπαλίμοισι (mit erotisch-bräutlichen Konnotationen); vgl. Apollonios Rhodios III, 280: Eros nähert sich heimlich καρπαλίμοισι ποσίν. Die den Dionysos verehrenden und sich ihm angleichenden lydischen Bakchen rühmen sich ihres schnellen Fußes, bei Euripides, *Ba.* 167f.: κῶλον ταχύπουν (vgl. ebd. 863f.).

[79] Pausanias V, 3.2 vermerkt, daß die Eleer der geschlechtlichen 'Mischung' zwischen Frau und Mann in besonderem Maße zuneigten: ὑπερησθέντες δὲ ἀμφότεροι τῆι μίξει καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες καὶ οἱ ἄνδρες. Im Kontext: die Gründung des Heiligtums für 'die Mutter' Athena (siehe oben, Anm. 43); als Gründerinnen benennt Pausanias τῶν Ἠλείων αἱ γυναῖκες: denn nachdem das Land durch einen Krieg 'von denjenigen im besten Mannesalter entblößt' worden war, beteten sie erfolgreich darum, sofort schwanger zu werden beim Geschlechtsverkehr mit den noch übriggebliebenen Männern, mit denen sie sich trafen (am Ufer eines Flusses, der anschließend 'der Süße' genannt wurde, wie der dazu gehörige Platz, der auch weiterhin ein solcher Treffpunkt blieb); von 'Ehemännern', wie die meisten Pausanias-Übersetzer wollen, steht in diesem Zusammenhang nichts. Daß 'die Frauen der Eleer' hier mit dem heiligen Ältesten-Kollegium der 16 gleichgesetzt werden könnten, dürfte wohl kein Forscher ernsthaft behaupten wollen. Die Stelle ist ein weiteres (und bisher unbeachtetes) Indiz dafür, daß die terminologische Unterscheidung bei Plutarch und Pausanias zwischen den 16 und den 'elischen Frauen' ernster genommen werden muß, als dies bisher gewöhnlich der Fall war (vgl. oben, Anm. 34).—Was das Verhältnis der Eleer zur Sexualität betrifft, so setzt Platon (*Symp.* 182 b1–6) den Akzent anders: Dort werden athenische Vorurteile gegenüber der unsublimierten sexuellen (hier: homosexuellen) Freizügigkeit der Eleer (und der Boioter) reproduziert.

[80] Männliche Kultgemeinschaften, die im Dionysoskult geheime Riten (ὄργια) veranstalteten, sind aber ebenfalls bezeugt, siehe Pausanias VIII, 6.5 (die arkadischen Meliasten). Zur merkwürdigerweise in der Forschung oft in Abrede gestellten zentralen Bedeutung der heterosexuellen Erotik im von Frauen dominierten dionysischen Kontext vgl. Schlesier 1993 und 1998. Die ersten kollektiv benannten dionysischen Frauen in der Bildkunst (6. Jh. v. Chr.) heißen νύμφαι (Bräute, Nymphen); vgl. dazu Isler-Kerényi 1999, 557f. Siehe auch den locus classicus zur privilegierten Rolle der γυναῖκες (im Unterschied zu den παρθένοι), nach dem Vorbild der Mänaden, im Dionysoskult vieler griechischer Polisgemeinschaften: Diodor IV, 3.3.

[81] Die vorliegende Fassung dieses Aufsatzes konnte nicht allein von der Diskussion der Vortragsfassung in Leiden und von noch unpublizierten Arbeiten J.M. Bremers und Scott Scullions profitieren, sondern auch von der kritischen Lektüre durch Jean Bollack, Walter Burkert, Albert Henrichs, Tonio Hölscher und Henk Versnel.

BIBLIOGRAPHIE

Bérard, Claude, ΑΞΙΕ ΤΑΥΡΕ, *Cahiers d'archéologie romande* 5 (1976) 61–73.

Bergk, Theodor (ed.), *Poetae Lyrici Graeci*, Vol. III (Leipzig ^{4}1882).

Bodson, Liliane, *ΙΕΡΑ ΖΩΙΑ. Contribution à l'étude de la place de l'animal dans la religion grecque ancienne* (Bruxelles 1978).

Brandt, Elfriede, *Gruß und Gebet. Eine Studie zu Gebärden in der minoisch-mykenischen und frühgriechischen Kunst* (Waldsassen / Bayern 1965).

Bravo, Benedetto, *Pannychis e simposio. Feste private notturne di donne e uomini nei testi letterari e nel culto* (Pisa / Roma 1997).

Brelich, Angelo, *Gli eroi greci. Un problema storico-religioso* (Roma 1958).

Bremer, J.M., Greek hymns, in: H.S. Versnel (ed.), *Faith, Hope and Worship. Aspects of religious mentality in the ancient world* (Studies in Greek and Roman Religion 2, Leiden 1981) 193–215.

——, Invocation of Dionysos by the Women of Elis, in: W.D. Furley and J.M. Bremer (eds.), *Greek Hymns* (Tübingen 2001, im Druck).

Brown, Christopher, Dionysus and the Women of Elis: *PMG* 871, *GRBS* 23 (1982) 305–314.

Burkert, Walter, *Homo necans. Interpretationen altgriechischer Opferriten und Mythen* (Berlin / New York 1972).

——, *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche* (Stuttgart 1977).

——, The Meaning and Function of the Temple in Classical Greece, in: Michael V. Fox (ed.), *Temple in Society* (Winona Lake 1988) 27–47.

——, From Epiphany to Cult Statue: early Greek *theos*, in: Alan B. Lloyd (ed.), *What is a God? Studies in the nature of Greek divinity* (London 1997) 15–34.

Calame, Claude, *Les chœurs de jeunes filles en Grèce archaïque. I: Morphologie, fonction religieuse et sociale* (Roma 1977).

—— (ed.), *Alcman* (Roma 1983).

Casadio, Giovanni, *Storia del culto di Dioniso in Argolide* (Roma 1994).

Casevitz, M., Temples et sanctuaires: ce qu'apprend l'étude lexicologique, in: G. Roux (éd.), *Temples et sanctuaires* (Lyon 1984) 81–95.

Cessi, Camillo, *Storia della letteratura greca dalle origini all'età di Giustiniano*, Vol. I (Torino 1933).

Cook, A.B., *Zeus: A Study in Ancient Religion*, Vol. II (Cambridge 1925).

Creuzer, Georg Friedrich, *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen*, Teil IV [= *Deutsche Schriften*, neue und verbesserte. 1. Abteilung, 4. Band] (Leipzig / Darmstadt ^{3}1842) [^{1}1812].

Curtius, Andreas Wilhelm, *Der Stier des Dionysos* (Diss. Jena 1882).

Daraki, Maria, ΟΙΝΟΨ ΠΟΝΤΟΣ: La mer dionysiaque, *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 199/1 (1982) 3–22.

——, *Dionysos* (Paris 1985).

Del Grande, Carlo, *ΤΡΑΓΩΙΔΙΑ. Essenza e genesi della tragedia* (Milano / Napoli ^{2}1962) [^{1}1952].

Detienne, Marcel, Dionysos en ses parousies. Un dieu épidémique, in: École française de Rome (éd.), *L'association dionysiaque dans les sociétés anciennes* (Rome 1986) 53–83.

——, *Dionysos à ciel ouvert* (Paris 1986) (b).

Diehl, Ernst (ed.), *Anthologia Lyrica Graeca*, Vol. II (Leipzig 1925); ed. altera (Leipzig 1944).

Dieterich, Albrecht, De hymnis Orphicis [= Habilitationsschrift Marburg 1891], in: *Kleine Schriften*, hg. von Richard Wünsch (Leipzig / Berlin 1911) 69–110.

——, *Eine Mithrasliturgie* (Leipzig 1903).

Dodds, E.R., *Euripides Bacchae*, edited with introduction and commentary (Oxford ^{2}1960) [^{1}1944].

Eitrem, Samson, *Opferritus und Voropfer der Griechen und Römer* (Kristiania 1915).

Farnell, Lewis Richard, *The Cults of the Greek States*, Vol. V (Oxford 1909).

——, *Greek Hero Cults and Ideas of Immortality* (Oxford 1921).

Frazer, James George, *Pausanias's Description of Greece*, transl. with a commentary, Vol. III–IV (London 1898).

Georgoudi, Stella, *Des chevaux et des bœufs dans le monde grec. Réalités et représentations animalières à partir des livres XVI et XVII des Géoponiques* (Athen / Paris 1990).

Gernet, Louis et Boulanger, André, *Le génie grec dans la religion* (Paris 1932).

Ginouvès, René, *Balaneutikè. Recherches sur le bain dans l'antiquité grecque* (Paris 1962).

Graf, Fritz, *Nordionische Kulte, Religionsgeschichtliche und epigraphische Untersuchungen zu den Kulten von Chios, Erythrai, Klazomenai und Phokaia* (Rom 1985).

Grégoire, Henri, Bacchos le taureau et les origines de son culte, in: *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire offerts à Charles Picard*, Vol. I (Paris 1949) 401–405.

Halliday, W.R., *The Greek Questions of Plutarch*, with a new translation and a commentary (Oxford 1928).

Hanslik, R., s.v. Physkoa, *RE* XX/1 (1941) 1165f.

Harrison, Jane Ellen, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (Cambridge 1903).

——, *Themis. A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion* (Cambridge 1912).

Henrichs, Albert, Greek Maenadism from Olympias to Messalina, *HSCP* 82 (1978) 121–160.

——, Der rasende Gott: Zur Psychologie des Dionysos und des Dionysischen in Mythos und Literatur, *Antike und Abendland* 40 (1994) 31–58.

Hölderlin, Friedrich, *Sämtliche Werke. Frankfurter Ausgabe*, Bd. 6: Elegien und Epigramme, hg. von D.E. Sattler und Wolfram Groddeck (Frankfurt a. M. 1976).

Hölscher, Tonio, *Öffentliche Räume in frühen griechischen Städten* (Heidelberg 1998).

Hopfner, Theodor, *Plutarch. Über Isis und Osiris*, Übersetzung und Kommentar, Vol. II (Prag 1941).

Isler-Kerényi, Cornelia, Dionysos con una sposa, *Metis* 5/1–2 (1990) 31–51.

——, Frauen um Dionysos vom 7. Jahrhundert bis um 540 v. Chr., *Archäologischer Anzeiger* (1999) 553–566.

Jeanmaire, Henri, *Dionysos. Histoire du culte de Bacchus* (Paris 1951).

Keller, Otto, *Die antike Tierwelt*, Bd. I. *Säugetiere* (Leipzig 1909).

Kerényi, Karl, Dionysos am Alpheios, *Giessener Hochschulblätter* 6 (1959) [3 unpaginierte Seiten].

——, *Dionysos. Urbild des unzerstörbaren Lebens* (München / Wien 1976).

Kern, Otto, *Die Religion der Griechen*, Bd. I (Berlin 1926).

Kühner, Raphael und Blass, Friedrich, *Ausführliche Grammatik der griechischen Sprache*, Teil 1, Bd. II (Hannover / Leipzig ^{3}1892).

Lada-Richards, Ismene, *Initiating Dionysus. Ritual and Theatre in Aristophanes'* Frogs (Oxford 1999).

Larson, Jennifer, *Greek Heroine Cults* (Madison, Wisconsin 1995).

LSCG = Sokolowski, F., *Lois sacrées des cités grecques* (Paris 1969).

Lyons, Deborah, *Gender and Immortality. Heroines in Ancient Greek Myth and Cult* (Princeton, New Jersey 1997).

Maass, Ernst, ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ ΠΕΛΑΓΙΟΣ, *Hermes* 23 (1888) 70–80.

Mitsopoulos-Leon, Veronika, Zur Verehrung des Dionysos in Elis nochmals: ΑΞΙΕ ΤΑΥΡΕ und die sechzehn heiligen Frauen, *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung* 99 (1984) 275–290.

Morgan, Catherine, The Evolution of a Sacral 'Landscape': Isthmia, Perachora, and the Early Corinthian State, in: Susan A. Alcock and Robin Osborne (eds.), *Placing the Gods. Sanctuaries and Sacred Space in Ancient Greece* (Oxford 1994) 105–142.

Müller, Karl Otfried, *Geschichten Hellenischer Stämme und Städte*, Bd. I: *Orchomenos und die Minyer* (Breslau ^{2}1844) [^{1}1820].

Nagy, Gregory, *Pindar's Homer. The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past* (Baltimore 1990).

Nilsson, Martin P., *Griechische Feste von religiöser Bedeutung mit Ausschluss der attischen* (Stuttgart 1906).

——, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, Bd. I (München ^{3}1967) [^{1}1940].

Nock, Arthur Darby, The Cult of Heroes (1944), in: *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World*, Vol. II, ed. by Zeph Stewart (Oxford 1972).

Otto, Walter F., *Dionysos. Mythos und Kultus* (Frankfurt a. M. 1933).

Page, Denys (ed.), *Poetae Melici Graeci* [= *PMG*] (Oxford 1962).

Pfister, Friedrich, *Der Reliquienkult im Altertum.* 2 Halbbde. (Gießen 1909/1912).

Philippson, Alfred, s.v. Elis. A. Die Landschaft, *RE* I/10 (1905) 2368–2373.

Philippson, Alfred und Kirsten, Ernst, *Die griechischen Landschaften. Eine Landeskunde*, Bd. III: Der Peloponnes, Teil 2 (Frankfurt a. M. 1959).

PMG = Page, Denys (ed.), *Poetae Melici Graeci* (Oxford 1962).

Polignac, François de, *Cults, Territory, and the Origins of the Greek City-State* (Chicago / London 1995) [frz. ^{1}1984].

Preisendanz, Karl, Zum Thyiafest, *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 21 (1922) 231–233.

——, s.v. Thyia, s.v. Thyiaden, *RE* II/11 (1936) 679–684, 684–691.

Privitera, G. Aurelio, *Dioniso in Omero e nella poesia greca arcaica* (Roma 1970).

Preller, Ludwig, *Griechische Mythologie*, Bd. I, 3. Aufl. von E. Plew (Berlin 1872) [^{1}1854].

Prott, Hans von, MHTHP. Bruchstücke zur griechischen Religionsgeschichte, *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 9 (1906) 87–94.

Rapp, A., Die Mänade im griechischen Cultus, in der Kunst und Poesie, *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* N. F. 27 (1872) 1–22, 562–611.

Rizakis, A. D. (Hrsg.), *Achaia und Elis in der Antike* (Athen 1991).

Rocha-Pereira, Maria Helena (ed.), *Pausanias Graeciae Descriptio*, Vol. II: Libri V–VIII (Leipzig 1977).

Rohde, Erwin, *Psyche. Seelencult und Unsterblichkeitsglaube der Griechen*, Bd. II (Freiburg i. B. / Leipzig / Tübingen ^{2}1898) [^{1}1894].

Rudhardt, Jean, *Pensée religieuse et actes constitutifs du culte dans la Grèce classique* (Paris ^{2}1992) [^{1}1958].

Schlesier, Renate, Mischungen von Bakche und Bakchos. Zur Erotik der Mänaden in der antiken griechischen Tradition, in: Horst Albert Glaser (Hrsg.), *Annäherungsversuche. Zur Geschichte und Ästhetik des Erotischen in der Literatur* (Bern / Stuttgart / Wien 1993) 7–30.

——, Die Seele im Thiasos. Zu Euripides, *Bacchae* 75, in: Jens Holzhausen (Hrsg.), ΨΥΧΗ—*Seele—anima. Festschrift für Karin Alt* (Stuttgart / Leipzig 1998) 37–72.

——, Menschen und Götter unterwegs. Ritual und Reise in der griechischen Antike, in: Tonio Hölscher (Hrsg.), *Gegenwelten zu den Kulturen Griechenlands und Roms in der Antike* (München / Leipzig 2000) 129–157.

Schroeder, Otto, *Grundriss der griechischen Versgeschichte* (Heidelberg 1930).

Schwenn, Friedrich, *Gebet und Opfer. Studien zum griechischen Kultus* (Heidelberg 1927).

Schwyzer, Eduard, *Griechische Grammatik*, Bd. I (München 1939).

Scullion, Scott, Dionysos and Katharsis in *Antigone*, *Classical Antiquity* 17 (1998) 96–122.

——, Dionysos at Elis, *Philologus* (im Druck).

Seaford, Richard, *Reciprocity and Ritual. Homer and Tragedy in the Developing City-State* (Oxford 1994).

Servais, Jean, Recherches sur le port de Cyllène, *BCH* 85 (1961) 123–161.

——, Le site helladique de Khlémoutsi et l'Hyrminè homérique, *BCH* 88 (1964) 9–50.

Thomson, George, *Aeschylus and Athens. A Study in the Social Origins of Drama* (London ^{4}1973) [^{1}1941].

Titchener, J.B. (ed.), *Plutarchi Aetia Graeca*, in: *Plutarchi Moralia*, rec. et emend. W. Nachstädt / W. Sieveking / J.B. Titchener, Vol. II (Leipzig 1935) 337–366.

——, *The Manuscript Tradition of Plutarch's Aetia Graeca and Aetia Romana* (Urbana 1924).

Trümpy, Catherine, *Untersuchungen zu den altgriechischen Monatsnamen und Monatsfolgen* (Heidelberg 1997).

Tsantsanoglou, K. and Parássoglou, G.M., Two Gold Lamellae from Thessaly, *Hellenika* 38 (1987) 3–16 = SEG XXXVII 497.

Tümpel, K., ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ ΗΑΛΙΕΥΣ, *Philologus* 48 (1889) 681–696.

Untersteiner, Mario, *Le origini della tragedia* (Milano 1942).

——, *Le origini della tragedia e del tragico. Dalla preistoria a Eschilo* (Torino 1955).

Usener, Hermann, *Altgriechischer Versbau. Ein Versuch vergleichender Metrik* (Bonn 1887).

——, *Götternamen. Versuch einer Lehre von der religiösen Begriffsbildung* (Bonn 1896).

Vernant, Jean-Pierre, Le Dionysos masqué des *Bacchantes* d'Euripide, *L'Homme* 93 (1985) 31–58.

Versnel, H.S., *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion, I. Ter Unus. Isis, Dionysos, Hermes: Three Studies in Henotheism* (Studies in Greek and Roman Religion 6, I, Leiden 1990, ^{2}1998).

Villanueva Puig, Marie-Christine, À propos des Thyiades de Delphes, in: École française de Rome (éd.), *L'association dionysiaque dans les sociétés anciennes* (Rome 1986) 31–51.

Welcker, Friedrich Gottlieb, *Griechische Götterlehre*, Bd. II (Göttingen 1860).

Weniger, Ludwig, *Das Kollegium der Sechzehn Frauen und der Dionysosdienst in Elis* [= Beilage zum Jahresberichte des Gymnasiums zu Weimar 1883] (Weimar 1883).

West, Martin L., *Greek Metre* (Oxford 1982).

Wide, Sam, Chthonische und himmlische Götter, *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 10 (1907) 257–268.

Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, Ulrich von, *Griechische Verskunst* (Berlin 1921).

——, Ulrich von, *Der Glaube der Hellenen*, Bd. II (Darmstadt ^{3}1959) [^{1}1932].

Winkler, Gerhard / König, Roderich (Hrsg.), *C. Plinius Secundus d. Ä. Naturkunde.* Lateinisch-Deutsch, Bücher III–IV (München / Zürich 1988).

Wünsch, Richard, s.v. Hymnos, *RE* I/17 (1914) 140–183.

Wyttenbach, Daniel (ed.), *Plutarchi Moralia*, Vol. II/1 (Leipzig ^{2}1827).

Zimmermann, Bernhard, *Dithyrambos. Geschichte einer Gattung* (Göttingen 1992).

Zuntz, Günther, *Persephone. Three Essays on Religion and Thought in Magna Graecia* (Oxford 1971).

APOLLO AND DIONYSOS: STARTING FROM BIRTH

FROMA I. ZEITLIN

Preface

In this essay, my homage to my cherished friend, Henk Versnel, I intend to revisit two of his equally old friends: Apollo and Dionysos. Henk has made important contributions to the study and understanding of the two gods, whose birth stories I intend to explore. His investigation of the relations between the Greek god Apollo and the Roman god Mars reopened an old and formerly discredited inquiry first raised by Roscher (many years ago). Through rigorous scholarship and the eclectic use of several methods, he demonstrated the grounds by which we might indeed discern significant parallels between the functions of these two gods, especially with regard to the initiatory process.[1] As for Dionysos, Henk's provocative essay on Euripides' *Bacchae*, was a landmark study in the interpretation of the play. Working from the interrelations of literature, myth and ritual, in the light of the historical conditions under which the tragedy was performed, Versnel persuasively argued for correlations between the introduction of the mythic Dionysos into the city, an event relegated to the distant past, and Athenian responses to the importation of new cults in Euripides' day. In his view, the chief paradox of the play lies in the conflicting claims between the demands of a totalitarian society (in the figure of Pentheus) and the equally tyrannical claims of the imperious new god (Dionysos), whose advent threatened the body politic.[2] I have learned much from these essays as from so much else of Henk's work.

---

[1] Versnel 1993, 290–334.

[2] Versnel 1990, 96–205.

I

Apollo and Dionysos are half-brothers. Sons of Zeus by different mothers, their inclusion in the Greek pantheon is due to their descent from the most powerful of all fathers, 'the father of gods and men'. Along with other progeny of Zeus—notably, Hermes, Athena, and Artemis—these divinities constitute a group of Olympian siblings who move in and out of each other's orbits and also intervene in human life in various significant ways, whether singly or together. In accordance with the essential principle that gods in a polytheistic system operate in a nexus of relations that mutually define their attributes, functions, natures, and spheres of action, we have come to realize the substantial benefits of taking this kind of contextual approach to the study of ancient Greek religion, one pioneered in many respects by Jean-Pierre Vernant and the so-called French school of classical scholars.[3]

In the minds of many, from antiquity to the present, from Plutarch to Nietzsche and beyond, Dionysos and Apollo already form a couple, most often viewed as occupying opposite sides of a spectrum, especially in their joint roles at Delphi, where Dionysos has his place, chiefly when Apollo is absent during the winter months. But a more complex picture would obviously emerge with detailed analysis of ancient evidence and a broader frame of reference. The far-reaching goal would be to clarify the relationship between the two gods through contrast and comparison, antithesis and complement, in cult as in myth, in archaeological as in literary forms, and finally, in local as well as Panhellenic, or national, contexts.

The results of such a comprehensive inquiry would perhaps fill several volumes and would, no doubt, even challenge what follows to some extent. For while a structuralist outlook may in theory be *bonne à penser* ('good to think with'), opposites are hardly ever so clear cut when it comes to practice, where we would find more than a few shifts and exchanges of attributes as well as some significant overlaps or blurring of boundaries. Nevertheless, my aim here is more modest and even more tentative. I have chosen one particular aspect as my point of departure: namely, to begin at the beginning with the stories of their birth. As anthropomorphic figures, gods have a life story, one that brings them into being, establishes their individual identities and prerogatives, and allots them a place in a system of divinities that is organized along family lines. Although gods, of course, are exempt from death or extinction, they resemble mortals in that they too are subject to rules of genealogy and laws of procreation. Like mortals, they are engaged in matters of sex, parentage, and the processes of generation.

---

[3] For convenience's sake, see my introduction in Vernant 1991 for an assessment of his contributions to the analysis of myth.

Greek mythology is unusually preoccupied with stories of origins. This is a distinctive cultural fact that should not be overlooked. Aristotle's insistence on looking to the *archê* or beginning as essential to understanding the *telos* or end of any organism, process, or institution may be couched in philosophical terms, but the concept is thoroughly in keeping with Greek beliefs and outlook. Another indication of this concern, this time in the medical sphere, is the privileged place granted to the topic of embryology. Even though science might seem to obey a different logic and argumentation, the variety of often extravagant theories proposed to account for how we come into being attests to the essential link between social norms and abstract ideas which reflect and also codify those norms.

But when it comes to the gods, while we may start from the biological facts we know (as did the Greeks themselves), of sexual contact between a male and female in which the male inseminates the female and she gestates, bears, and nurtures children, the mythological imagination is free to explore a range of reproductive strategies not available in the human sphere. These can recompose the biological facts of human sex and birth into fantastic patterns of substitutes, surrogates, and other fictive arrangements.

Such strategies run the gamut from parthenogenesis, or creation by a female entity alone (generally from Gaia or the earth) to a male's imitation of pregnancy through the act of swallowing his young (e.g., Kronos). Or, in a direct reversal of the 'facts of life', a male may give birth to a female, as in the case of Zeus and Athena, not from his loins but from his head. The most spectacular engendering of this kind may well belong to the primordial male god, Ouranos, whose castrated genitals spontaneously produced the goddess Aphrodite from his semen that drifted out to sea and the avenging Erinyes from the drops of his blood that were shed on the earth. Other variations may involve the nature of the sexual contact itself: shape shifting (Zeus and Leda), insemination as a shower of gold (Zeus and

Danae), or ejaculated semen wiped off and cast on the earth (Hephaistos and Athena). The obstetrical process too, whatever form it may take, is also relevant to the implications suggested by the birth of a given offspring and its initial mode of nurture and subsequent maturation. Yet it is important to note that beyond the physiological details, the culminating moment of the entire narrative of a god's birth and infancy will be the mode of acceptance into the Olympian order and the winning of an acknowledged place in the social hierarchy of divine power.[4]

At the summit of this hierarchy is, of course, the figure of Zeus, whose final accession to this position of hegemony is the motivation that sustains Hesiod's entire *Theogony*, the canonical Greek version of the birth of the gods. This long hexameter poem, dating to the 7th century BCE, recounts not only how the world came into being but, more significantly, how Zeus, as the third in line, finally overcame the obstacles to his rule and consolidated his Olympian reign. One major means to his global victory is the outcome of a myth of succession in which Zeus ensures that he is the last of a dynastic series of replacements of fathers by sons. For however his own birth and nurture obey the rules that operate in the human sphere, albeit under unusual circumstances, he must find a way to forestall any possibility of a new rival to challenge his sovereignty.[5] The other requirement is the triumph of the paternal principle over the female one and the eclipse of her earlier priority in the matter of reproduction, which began with the emergence of Gaia or earth and attested to her 'natural' procreative ability as the 'mother of us all'. Zeus accomplishes both these ends by the same action. He first absorbs the female into himself in order to contravene the prophecy that the goddess Metis would bring forth a child stronger than himself. He therefore swallows the already pregnant Metis, the principle of resourceful intelligence and appropriating her prerogatives, both mental and physical, he produces an offspring—from his head. This offspring is his daughter, Athena—a female and not a male who might grow up to succeed his father. Additionally, born fully armed, with helmet, shield, and lance, Athena is not even subject to ordinary infancy, and remaining a virginal daughter, never to bear children of her own, she remains eternally his most trustworthy ally (*Th.* 886–895). Only after this critical event of 'male maternity' can Zeus release his own generative power in subsequent matings with both gods and mortals. In this way, he can populate the world with numerous and diversified progeny, both male and female, who owe their origins and their attributes to him. Thus, if he is not the original creator god, who brought the world into being as, for example, in the Hebrew Bible and many other cultures, his subsequent procreative activities serve as an important form of compensation.

---

[4] This is especially true of Hermes, whose Homeric hymn is dedicated to the wiles of the infant god to secure Olympian prerogatives, in rivalry with his half-brother, Apollo.

[5] I have treated elsewhere the unusual circumstances surrounding Zeus's own birth in the *Theogony*. There I argued that 'Zeus is the first instance of an infant god. He therefore requires nurture, like any child, until he comes of age, undergoing a maturational process that brings him perilously close to the realities of the mortal condition and the exigencies of human development. Second, although the last-born child always enjoys a symbolic advantage in that he closes a genealogical series and can exemplify principles of higher evolution, there is also an undeniable value in being first, already present "from the beginning". Zeus' claim to hegemony over the cosmos resides in his status as the last and most developed of the Olympian gods. Yet he must somehow attain the prestige of origins that will sanction his position with reference to the first foundations of the world, a place of primordial honor that belongs to Gaia, from whom Zeus is genealogically twice removed.' See the fuller discussion in Zeitlin 1996, 72–73 and below n. 50.

In the male-centered society of ancient Greece which engendered these myths, the engenderings of the gods then must also involve a dialogue between male and female, between father and mother, in alliance or competition, in hostility or affinity, in clear lines of demarcation or studied ambivalence. Hence, every one of these stories about divine births inevitably entails a confrontation with issues of masculine and feminine and the relations between the sexes that underlies the construction of identity in the world of the immortals. These accounts, as we shall see in respect to Apollo and Dionysos, rehearse again some of those same theogonic motifs in distinctive and significant ways, even as they extend into different directions for other purposes.

Taking the perspective of origins, then, let us first establish some of the salient characteristics of Apollo and Dionysos as they emerge from the circumstances surrounding their births.[6]

---

[6] For the birth stories of gods, see Laager 1957, Loeb 1979, and Beaumont 1995 and 1998. Loeb and Beaumont are principally concerned with iconography.

II

Like all myths in the Greek repertory, the birth stories of Dionysos and Apollo are subject to many variants and undergo many elaborations in content and differences in detail, according to context and historical period. The task is sufficiently complex when addressing the tradition of a single deity; it increases substantially when two are in question, especially when our sources for each are far from symmetrical and are not even commensurate with one another. The birth story of Dionysos, for example, has quite another history in the Orphic mystic tradition which is relevant in some respects but cannot be fully addressed in the present discussion. Yet the disparities between the two gods are evident in the more normative traditions that must draw upon archaic and classical sources that include Homer, Hesiod, the Homeric hymns, choral poetry, and tragic drama, along with other later testimony. While we can turn to the evidence of a long Homeric hymn for Apollo, we have only a few fragments of such texts in honor of Dionysos. At any rate, there are few literary references to Dionysos until the fifth century (notably in tragedy, culminating in Euripides' *Bacchae*).[7] But, despite all these difficulties, the outlines of these accounts are sufficiently well marked to serve the purposes of this brief survey.

While Zeus is the god who fathers both Apollo and Dionysos, one is engendered by his mating with a goddess, Leto, the other with a mortal, Semele, daughter of Kadmos, the founder of Thebes. Both mothers, however, share the common motif of persecution by Hera, the legitimate wife of Zeus, who interferes with a normal obstetrical delivery, although in quite contrary ways. The strategy Hera devises in her campaign against Apollo is to *delay* his birth through various means. In one version, the goddess attempts to condemn Leto to a perpetual wandering as a way of preventing her from finding any solid ground where she might give birth.[8] In another variant, she refuses to allow Eileithyia, goddess of childbirth, attendance. Leto is therefore compelled to labor in anguish for nine days and nine nights, until the other goddesses (Dione, Rhea, Themis, and Amphitrite), who are present at her side, persuade the divine midwife to come in despite of Hera (*h. Ap.* 95–101). In the case of Dionysos, on the other hand, Hera is the agent, as it were, of his *premature* birth, since she had deceitfully persuaded the pregnant Semele to look upon Zeus face to face, with immediate lethal consequences.[9]

---

[7] For discussion of the evidence regarding Dionysos' birth, see especially Laager 1957, 112–50.

[8] Call. *Hymn to Delos* 59–70; cf. Hyg. *Fabulae* 140.

So, whether through an endless prolongation of pregnancy and childbirth or through an excessive acceleration of these processes, we note that Hera interferes in a woman's normal parturient experience. More accurately, she creates complications that would not be unknown to medical science of the day.[10] The goddess's underlying motive in both tales is the same. She competes with Zeus for control over the rights to reproduction, although again each time with different results. For Apollo, Hera's efforts to postpone parturition indefinitely takes place within a wholly feminine milieu, starting from the personification of the island, Delos, itself as a timid female. The fact that Leto is already in the hands of other female divinities, who come to her aid (those, we might note, of an earlier generation) only reinforces the more typical situation that childbirth is an affair of women from which men are generally excluded.[11] Moreover, the status of Delos as a wandering island in the sea before earning a fixed locale as the site of Leto's travail, seems to bear a suspicious resemblance to 'the wandering womb' of Hippocratic gynecology. The notion that a woman's uterus is not fixed in place, but may drift upward and cause suffocation or sink downward and cause paralysis is a well-known syndrome identified by Greek doctors. The womb, in Greek, *hystera*, is the cause, in their eyes, of a *hysteria*, whose cure requires insemination and pregnancy in order to anchor it firmly in place.[12] Despite herself, we might say, Hera's interference gives ample verification of Greek ideas about women's gynecological difficulties.

---

[9] Aesch. *Semele* (unfortunately known to us only from a few fragments), Pl. *Republic* 2.381d, the suggestive remains of *Hymn to Dionysos* 1, and especially, Eur. *Bacchae* 1–9. For further discussion, see Gantz (1993) 474–475. Later sources—Diodorus 3.64.3–4 (cf. 4.2.2–3), Apollod. 3.4.3, Ov., *Metamorphoses* 3.256–315, and Hyg. *Fabulae* 167, 179—agree on Hera's deception (among other motifs) as the cause of Semele's destruction.

[10] For important recent accounts of women and childbirth, see Demand 1994 and King 1998. Hera's intervention is of a comparable sort, when it comes to the birth of Herakles. In this instance, she retards his birth, but she is also capable of accelerating that of his rival, Eurystheus. She does so to thwart Zeus's prophecy that the child born on that day would rule those around him (*Iliad* 19.95–125). Hera's political strategies in the struggle for power invariably derive from the feminine domain—either with respect to birth, as here and elsewhere, or to seduction, as in the *Dios Apatê* (Hom. *Iliad* 14.158–360).

[11] For more nuanced discussion of actual medical practice, which, as it evolved over time, came to include male physicians, see Hanson 1994 and Demand 1995.

In Dionysos' case, however, Hera's vengeance against Semele leads to an outcome exactly contrary to what she had intended, since it now necessitates yet another act of male obstetrical prowess. Zeus rescues the premature Dionysos from his dying mother and sewing him into his thigh (another site of fecundation, according to ancient belief)[13] until the infant could come to term, he thereby outdoes Hera in her own feminine specialty by giving birth to the child by himself.

The significance of this competition between the two consorts is marked by the fact that the Delphic section of the Homeric hymn to Apollo offers another version of the contest that is introduced, not as intrinsic element of the narrative, but as an imported digression. The young Apollo has already left his maternal birthplace and has now come to Delphi as the end of his wanderings. Hera has no direct part to play in this new phase of the story, but her intrusion once again into the text not only provides a structural parallel to her first, and essential, intervention in the matter of Leto. It also reinforces the ideological import of Apollo's attainment of adulthood and rise to power as the son of his prestigious father. Upon arrival at Delphi, Apollo immediately encounters another pernicious female threat in the figure of a bloodthirsty she-dragon (in later versions, named Delphyne), who guards the place.[14] But the poet now halts here for a moment in good epic style to expand the effect of the scene by telling us, not of the serpent, but of her nursling, another monstrous creature named Typho, whose mother, in this instance, is none other than Hera. She had conceived and engendered him all by herself, we are told here, for the express purpose of retaliating against Zeus, not for his rescue of the infant Dionysos, but for 'daring to give birth to the gray-eyed Athena'. Hera had first taken her grievance to the assembly of all the gods. 'Would I not have borne her', says Hera, 'I, who was called your very own among the immortals who dwell in the broad sky? And now I shall devise some evil for you in return' (323–325). Of Delphyne's ancestry, oddly enough, we hear not a word. Instead, the Delphic dragon is evoked only through the genealogy of her foster child, whose maternal origins are firmly attached to the same Hera who had earlier directed her attack against Apollo's mother. The goddess had expected to give birth to a mighty child, one who would challenge Zeus himself. Instead she produced a horrible creature, 'whose aspect resembled neither god's nor man's'. She therefore rejects him and hands him over instead to a more appropriate 'mother', the monstrous she-dragon.[15]

---

[12] On the tradition of Delos as a floating island, see Pind. fr. 33d SM, who recounts that at the arrival of the goddess, four columns emerged from the roots of the earth and set the island firmly upon them. Callimachus (*Hymn to Delos* 36–40), as well as other later sources, also addresses this theme. The Homeric hymn does not mention the status of the island, but suggests the precarious situation of Delos after the fact of Apollo's birth, when he first sees the light. The island fears that the god would then turn her upside down and push her into the sea to sink beneath the waves (70–76). She assents only when Leto reassures her that she will receive an altar and precinct and enjoy exceptional honors (83–88). On the wandering womb and 'hysteria', see e.g., Pl. *Timaeus* 91b–c, as well as numerous passages from the Hippocratic corpus. For recent discussions, see, e.g., Hanson 1992 and Demand 1994, 103–06, and for the suggestion of Delos as the wandering womb, see Solomon 1993. On the status of Delos as 'not earth', see further below.

[13] See, for example, Onians 1951, 182–83.

[14] In the hymn he faces another female threat on his way to the shrine in the figure of Telphusa, the nymph who guards the spring of Krisa, where Apollo had

The import of Hera's malevolence extends beyond a wife's jealousy of her husband's love affairs and resentment against their offspring to assume rich cosmological implications. In the first instance, Hera's attempts to suppress the birth of Leto's progeny may be compared in miniature to Ouranos' initial refusal to allow his children by Gaia to see the light of day—an act that would have arrested the entire process of creation, were it not for Gaia's intervention through her youngest child, Kronos. In fact, Hera's initial strategy of trying to prevent Leto from even finding a place where she could give birth marks her as a kind of anti-Gaia, the figure whose emergence as Earth at the beginning of the *Theogony* established the indispensable foundation of all that followed. In the second act, however, Hera 'imitates' a negative Gaia, who, in a later stage of the

---

first intended to establish his temple. Angered at his proposal, she deceitfully persuades him to continue on to Delphi, and only after his encounter with Delphyne does he realize her true motives and return to punish her by burying her spring under a heap of overhanging rocks (242–276, 375–387). As Fontenrose 1959, 366–374, argues, Telphusa seems to be a doublet of the she-dragon.

[15] A similar version that Hera bore Typho alone in resentment against Zeus is reported for Stesichorus (239 *PMG*).

theogonic narrative (*Th.* 819–21), had produced Typho (although in a sexual union with Tartaros) to do battle against Zeus and dethrone him. The recapitulation of these motifs in the story of Apollo's birth and early career situates the new god in a frame of reference that enhances his stature as a 'second Zeus', without running the risk that the son might eventually displace his father.[16]

Broadly speaking, the early history of both gods follow a typical pattern of Greek myth that insists on creating a tension between two opposing maternal figures, one positive and one negative.[17] Each god has occasion to defend and protect his 'good' birth mother. Given the odd circumstances of Dionysos' conception and birth, he must continually assert the truth of his own divinity as well as vindicate his mother's honor that Zeus was indeed her partner. Subsequently, he will go so far as to descend into the underworld to recover Semele so that she may be elevated at last to immortal status.[18] Apollo first slays the giant Tityos, who had attempted to rape Leto.[19] Later he punishes the woman, Niobe, for impugning his mother's honor by boasting that she surpassed Leto in maternal prowess by bearing seven daughters and seven sons in contrast to the goddess's two.[20]

---

[16] The *Theogony* (927–99) however, also records another instance of Hera's competition with Zeus and also in angry response to the birth of Athena. This time it is Hephaistos (who in other versions is the son of both Hera and Zeus). Unlike Typho, the god is given a positive valence ('he surpasses in the skill of his hands all the descendants of Ouranos'). In the hymn, Hera's decision to produce a son mightier than his father (in Typho) is also directly related to her resentment that the child she had previously borne (Hephaistos) was 'weakly among all the blessed gods and shrivelled of foot, a shame and disgrace to me in heaven.' Here, it is his deformity, not his artisanal skill, which is the issue at point. But it is worth noting that Hera seems to produce either deformed children (Hephaistos) or monstrous ones (Typho), and her reaction in both situations is the same. She rejects these offspring, casting Hephaistos into the sea (where Thetis takes and rears him) and gives Typho over to the care of the serpent at Delphi. She remains the anti-mother, even to her own progeny, while conversely, her failure to produce agreeable offspring may account for her jealous reactions against those who do. For discussion of Apollo in the light of the succession myth of the *Theogony*, see Clay 1989, 33–45, 63–73.

[17] This tension may also be embodied in the same maternal figure. Gaia is the best (and indeed, the original) model of a figure who can alternate between these extremes. See Sourvinou-Inwood 1991, 227. Clytemnestra, Ino, Creousa, and Hecuba are other prominent examples.

[18] The literary evidence is late: Cyzicene Epigrams (*Anthologia Palatina* 3.1), Diod. 4.25.4, Apollod. 3.53), Plut. *Moralia* 565F–566a, and Paus. 2.31.2, 2.37.5, but the story is much older. See Gantz 1993, 476–77 for discussion.

[19] Apollod. 1.4.1, Paus. 10.11.1, and note 28, below.

[20] On the evidence, starting from Homer on, see Gantz's survey (1993) 536–39. The number of children vary according to the account.

Both deities even identify with the experiences of their mothers. Apollo follows his mother, only initially, in imitating the wanderings of Leto. Her search for a place to give birth until she reaches Delos is matched by his own peregrinations, marked by many detours, that precede his arrival at his destination in Delphi.[21] Dionysos, on the other hand, perpetually reenacts Semele's suffering and transfiguration in his own persecution and they remain far more symbiotically bound together.

What may we deduce from these maternal associations and the circumstances of the births of these divinities? In the first place, Dionysos seems to remain forever attached to the world of women, both to his nurses and to his maenads, who participate in his rites and follow in his entourage. He thus eternally shuttles between child and adult in a mode that characterizes him as the god of cyclical alternation and repetition.[22] We might suppose that in his second birth from his father, Dionysos would more logically be aligned on the side of Zeus and the masculine sphere. Yet one of the epithets that describes him, *bimêtôr* (of two mothers), suggests a double maternity—as though Zeus indeed were another mother or Dionysos had never overcome his initial deprivation in being born too soon at the cost of his mother's life.[23] The result at any rate is that in myth (and later in art) Dionysos accedes to less than full male status.[24] Despite his association with satyrs and with phalloi in cult, especially in processions (and in vase paintings where as a child, he is handed over to Pappasilenos or a satyr), he is increasingly represented as an effeminized god as the fifth century progresses.[25] His signature, in fact, is a mixture of the sexes, an androgynous combination of male and female attributes. Or as recently proposed by Michael Jameson, he is a figure who by his ambivalent status mediates between male and female because the forces his cult releases arouse both men and women in ways that threaten civic order for all.[26] Furthermore, transvestism for males is a recurrent feature in some of his cultic festivals, as we may recall in the best known example of Euripides' Pentheus in the *Bacchae*, who under the spell of Dionysos abandons his aggressive persona to dress as a woman.

---

[21] See Baltes 1982, Clay 1989, 57–58, and Thalmann 1984, 70–73.

[22] The god's babyhood is especially invoked in the rituals surrounding Dionysos Liknites on Mount Parnassus as Delphi. For discussion, see Harrison 1922, 401–403, 517–534, Jeanmaire 1951, 196–197, Kerényi 1976, 212–226, Daraki 1985, 20–21, 127–129, 260, n. 49, Burkert 1983, 124–125, and Villanueva-Puig 1986.

[23] For this and other relevant epithets, see Laager 1957, 134–135. Dionysos' rescue of Semele in a sense also reenacts Zeus's rescue of him. Lyons 1997, 110–111 observes that 'in the usual scheme of things, mothers give life to their sons. In Greek myth divine mothers and mother-substitutes also frequently try to give immortality to their sons, and inevitably fail. Dionysos, however, succeeds in giving immortality to his mother, and in so doing, seems almost to reverse the natural order once more. Semele has been prevented from giving birth to her own son, yet he will give her immortal life. This rescue is yet another appropriation of the maternal function, this time by Dionysos, and is clearly dependent on the first appropriation, in which Zeus' thigh serves as a womb for the embryonic god.' See also her entire discussion, with useful bibliography, 103–133.

[24] As Lyons 1997, 110, points out, Dionysos is 'the only male divinity among the Olympians whose relationships to mortal women are not exclusively erotic....Unlike these divinities, he has few myths uniting him with mortal women and is credited with the paternity of very few children. By the same token, women figure in his myths in many other roles, appearing as mother, nurse, opponent, and supporter'.

Apollo, on the other hand, is the only god to be born with a twin sister. She is protected or excluded, however, from the female hostility directed against her brother. In some accounts, she is even conveniently born before him so that she may help her mother by performing the function of midwife at his birth. (Gods grow up very quickly). As such, she is the antidote, we might say, to Hera, and establishes from the start her subsequent role as the goddess to whom women in childbirth appeal for succor.[27] More to the point, Apollo is provided immediately with a feminine counterpart, who often acts *with* him, as in the slaying of Niobe's children (in defense of their mother), or else acts *for* him, as in the slaying of Koronis, the mortal woman, mother of Asklepios, who betrayed the god by choosing a mortal husband. In some versions of those exploits that are more typically assigned to him, she even *takes his place* (for example, the slaying of Tityos).[28] If brother and sister act together on occasion and share certain attributes (e.g., archery), their division into male and female divinities only emphasizes further the distinctive gendered characteristics of each (Apollo's arrows, for example, are said to bring an easy death to men, those of Artemis to women). We might further understand this split, repeated and emphasized in cultic practices, as one that divides the age groups of the young adolescents into their respective statuses of *kouroi* and *korai*. Their divine counterparts represent in permanence this transitional status in human society, with Artemis as the perpetual maiden and Apollo as the ephebic male. It is, in fact, in this capacity as ephebic representative of all *kouroi*, that, unlike Dionysos, Apollo traces out the linear journey that leads from birth to adulthood, defined as a change of location from Delos to Delphi, where freed from the encircling protection of his mother and her attendants at his birth he gains hegemony over the oracular shrine.

---

[25] For the development of Dionysiac imagery, see, for example, Carpenter 1986 and 1997. On birth iconography, see also Loeb 1979 and Beaumont 1995 and 1998.

[26] Jameson 1997.

[27] I do not discuss here the hesitation of our sources in addressing the joint births of Artemis and Apollo in the same place and the same time. The Homeric hymn, dedicated to the praise of Apollo alone, shifts the birth of Artemis to a neighboring place (Ortygia) and seems to put it before Apollo's (14–18). Apollodorus (1.4.1) states directly that Artemis was born first, precisely with the aim of giving her a midwife's function in helping her mother with the birth of Apollo. Other texts try to reconcile Delos and Ortygia. See Laager 1957, 69–81.

[28] Niobe: e.g., Hom. *Iliad* 24.602–617; Koronis: Pind. *Pythian* 3.8–46; Tityos: Apollo and Artemis, Pherecydes fr. 3F56; Artemis alone, Pind. *Pythian* 4.90–92.

More typically, as in the hymn, he takes possession of the shrine through violence, overcoming the dragon, who represents primordial chthonic power, as a good hero should.[29] Or, as in the opening of Aeschylus' *Eumenides* (1–20), for example, the shrine may be given to him voluntarily as the last in a chain of transmission that passed through female hands from the first owner, Gaia, Earth, to the goddess Themis, and finally, his own aunt, Phoebe, whose name is a mere byform of his own epithet, Phoibos (the shining one).[30] No matter the mode of acquisition, however, whether by force or by consent, the advent of Zeus's son to Delphi ends each time in his taking possession of the powers of divination, once a female prerogative, in the name of (and by the will of) his father.[31]

---

[29] Only in the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo* is the dragon a *drakaina*, later called Delphyne. Thereafter our sources speak of a male monster, Pytho, but he is always aligned with female chthonic forces who have prior possession of the shrine. At the same time, there is further confusion in the sources as to the sex of Delphyne, sometimes female, sometimes male. See further Fontenrose 1959, 14–24, esp. 14, n. 4, who concludes that Apollo may have faced two dragons, one male, one female.

[30] For the best account of the mythological history of the shrine, see Sourvinou-Inwood 1991.

[31] Euripides' *Iphigenia in Tauris* gives yet another version (1234–1282). Zeus must 'refound' Apollo's mantic prerogatives (*timai*) in the face of a new threat at Delphi. Resentful at Apollo's dismissal of her daughter from the shrine after his initial conquest of the dragon, nocturnal Earth gave birth (*eteknôsato*) to 'nocturnal phantoms of dreams' (*phasmat' oneirôn*) to take away the young god's monopoly on oracular truth. Only in the face of the child's supplication of his father to alleviate the goddess' anger (*mênin*), does Apollo regain his previous status. On the theme in general, see too Loraux 1989.

In either case, Apollo negotiates the separation from his birth mother, as all good ephebes should, while successfully overcoming threats from hostile female entities, and, unlike Dionysos, he can and does identify himself with the paternal principle of Zeus. It is no accident that Leto is habitually defined in the tradition as the sweetest of the female deities, the 'mildest in Olympus', as Hesiod's *Theogony* tells us (406–408), benevolent to all, to both mortals and gods. She affirms his divinity by feeding him immediately on nectar and ambrosia rather than the breast and supports him wholeheartedly in every way. The mother greets him fondly on his entry to Olympus at the beginning of the Homeric hymn, tenderly unstringing his bow, and closing his quiver. She is the one to lead him to his seat, 'rejoicing because she bore this bow-bearing and mighty son' (10–13). In other versions, such as the one in Euripides' *Iphigenia in Tauris*, she even carries him herself as a babe in arms to Delphi to facilitate his conquest of the shrine (1239, 1249–1251). The emphasis on her gentle temper and maternal pride suggests that this powerful new deity, who has now taken his place on Olympus, will prove no threat to his father's hegemony.[32] He will stand forever as the bearer of his father's word that supports the subordination of female to male, according to normative social rules, even as he sustains an important cult in his birthplace, Delos.[33] Appeal to Apollo as the child of Leto, even at Delphi, can always be invoked on behalf of mother love and yearning for children, as it is, for example, in Euripides' *Ion*.[34] In the face of the destructive mother, however, he will go so far in defense of paternal rights as to advocate matricide by sons to avenge their fathers against faithless women, whether in counseling Alkmaion, son of Amphiaraos and Eriphyle,[35] or, as in the better known case, in his role as the staunch defender of Orestes, who had killed his mother, Clytemnestra, at the god's behest.

---

[32] On the motif of sweet Leto, see Ramnoux 1962, 98. All the women of Leto's family (including Hesiod's Hekate and Phoebe), belong to an earlier pre-Olympian generation. Their power, as Ramnoux points out, is mitigated by the kindly temper attributed to them. Artemis, Leto's female offspring, does not, of course, fit this mold, but since her virginity insures she will not give birth to a son, she poses no threat to her father, Zeus.

[33] The inserted story of Hera's defeat by Zeus in the competition over reproduction in the case of Typho, which we examined earlier, suggests obliquely in another way that Apollo is not to replace his father but will gain his influence and prestige from association with his exploits.

[34] Ion, Creousa, and the chorus consistently invoke Apollo in this way: 127, 143, 188, 681, 907, 1619, and the birth scene at Delos is specifically recalled in 922. In the Homeric *Hymn to Hermes*, Apollo is frequently referred to as the son of Leto (176, 189, 243, 253, 261, 314, 321, 417, 500, 508, 513, 524), but here this affiliation is emphasized in contrast to Hermes, the son of Maia. The matronymics indicate the difference in status between these two rival siblings, but do not reflect any conflict between these two benevelolent maternal figures. The point of the hymn,

It may be argued, of course, that Apollo too is surrounded with female figures, this time in the persons of the Muses, a fact that might suggest a parallel to Dionysos with his entourage of maenad worshippers. But it need hardly be observed that, as female collectives, maenads and Muses are diametrically opposed to one another. Maenads occupy the marginal fringes of society, located in spaces outside the city and often transgressing social rules in their ecstatic behavior and abandonment of their domestic duties. The Muses descend in a direct line from Zeus through his mating with their mother, Mnemosyne (or Memory), and their status as the source of inspiration for the bardic tradition celebrates and sustains the entire ideological apparatus of Olympus. We might point here, for example, to the long proem of the *Theogony* (1–115), where their elaborate songs and dance introduce the entire work and their frequent representation in the iconographic record also reflects their positive aesthetic values in the conduct of human life. The Muses are purely virginal figures, daughters who remain eternally dependent on male authority. The maenads, by contrast, challenge strict categories of definition in the female sphere. They disquietingly mix both erotic and maternal attitudes, evince martial prowess when attacked by men, and they escape masculine control, at least temporarily, in following a god, who likewise blurs the boundaries between the genders.[36]

In his pioneering, if controversial, study of sex antagonism in Greek myth more than thirty years ago, *The Glory of Hera*, Philip Slater argued that the myths surrounding Apollo seem to aim at divesting him of what he calls 'maternal enthrallment'. Slater sees in Apollo the 'personification of anti-matriarchy, the epitome of the sky god, the crusader against earth deities, and the principle of Olympian

---

of course, is for Hermes to attain recognition from Zeus on Olympus, despite his relatively lowly origins and his position as the younger brother.

[35] On Alkmaion, see Delcourt 1959, Gantz 1993, 525–27, and n. 39 below.

[36] It should be noted, however, that the lines between the gods and their followers are not always so clear. The iconographical record shows a blurring at times between them, particularly in the context of a female entourage—Dionysos with the Muses and Apollo with Dionysiac women, most often Thyiades and in a Delphic context. I am grateful to Annie-France Laurens for sharing her unpublished work with me.

sunlight, a manifest rationality, that opposes all that is mysterious, hidden, dark, and irrational'.[37] Slater here seems to repeat the familiar formulations about this god who so often is said to embody the ideal of 'the Hellenic spirit', as for example, in the work of J.J. Bachofen and his theories about the development of civilization as a transition from 'mother right' to 'father right'.[38] But Slater does so with the aim of clouding this luminous and idealizing vision with darker shadows of ambivalence. Although Slater's psychoanalytic approach depends too heavily on anachronistic evidence from modern-day families and his Freudian approach is open to strong objections, he is often an excellent reader of mythological details. He notes that the god's 'dematrification', the process that will divorce him from the earthy side of nature, begins in his birth at Delos, a place of 'not-earth, an island in the sea, a rock that is narrow, barren, and uninviting'.[39] In some versions, in fact, the island of Delos only becomes visible with the birth of Apollo. Its very name (*dêlos* = clear, manifest) suggests an ultimate revelation into light.[40] If Delos in a sense is 'born' as a place where Apollo might be born, its status as a floating island in other variants, as earlier mentioned, also contributes to the same impression of a newly created site, a 'non-place', which gives up its mobility to find permanent anchorage only after Apollo himself has seen the light and has decreed the building of temples and shrines there to give due honor to that site. Pytho or Delphi is an equally unhospitable and unlikely spot. It too is rocky, and although situated on the mainland, it has no human habitation (its future priests must be imported from elsewhere) and it is well isolated from other foundations.

---

[37] Slater 1968, 137.

[38] Bachofen 1861;1948.

[39] Slater 1968, 138. Cf. n. 12 above. 'Dematrification' is evident also in one version of the aftermath to Alkmaion's murder of his mother, although for the opposite reason. In one version of the aftermath of Alkmaion's murder of his mother, when still haunted by her Erinyes, he is directed by the Pythia to find a new land, 'one brought up to light by the sea after the pollution of his mother's death.' The riddle refers to a newly formed delta of the river Acheloos, where he finally settles (Paus. 8.24.8; cf. Apollod. 3.7.5; Thuc. 2.102–103). Slater, 76–77, notes the import of this myth, but oddly enough, not in connection with his later discussion of Apollo and Delos. On the other hand, Detienne 1998, 44–47, recognizes the links between Alkmaion and Apollo with respect to divination, purification, and foundations, but not as related to the god's specific sponsorship of matricide.

[40] In Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos* (36–40), the floating island was called Asteria, because it 'shot like a star (*astêr*) to avoid Zeus's lust'. In Hesiod's *Theogony* (409–411)

Indeed, Apollo seems particularly associated with stones and rocks in an apparent contrast to Earth and her subterranean depths.[41] The omphalos stone at Delphi, which marks its location as the center of the cosmos, is set out in the open air, and so is the stone that Kronos had swallowed in place of Zeus. Once Kronos had disgorged it when Zeus came to power, it was afterwards set up there as a *sêma*, a sign and prodigy for all to see and marvel at—not only as the mark of Zeus' triumph over his father, Kronos, but in memory of Kronos' own obstetrical feat.[42] We might go even further and see both the omphalos stone and that of Kronos as attempts to transform Delphi into a place of male maternity, especially considering the etymology of the name Delphi itself as related to the word for 'womb' (as are dolphins, who also figure in the Homeric Hymn). Apollo's work takes place on the earth's surface that accepts the foundations of temples, towns, and colonies. Stone is the material that makes up the ramparts and dwellings of habitation, visible markers of culture in its conquest of nature, a function that Marcel Detienne has recently analyzed in depth.[43]

There is an obvious contrast between the hard and stationary qualities of stone and Dionysos' spheres of operation. For in addition to the cultivation of the vine and of unrestrained vegetal growth in general, Dionysos is associated everywhere with the liquid element in things, with all that is fluid, uncontained, and mobile, linked both to feminine bounty and also to masculine generativity, in keeping, perhaps, with the general mysteries of his double birth.[44]

Asteria is the sister of Leto. On the issues surrounding this etymology and Callimachus' use of this variant, see Mineur 1984, *ad loc.* Pindar connects Asteria and Delos (*Paean* 5.40–42). The other name for the island is usually Ortygia, connected especially to the birth of Artemis (cf. Pind. *Paean* 7b.43–52). See further Gantz 1993, 40.

[41] On this point, see Nilsson 1967, 204 and Sourvinou-Inwood 1987:1991, 226–27.

[42] On these two stone markers at Delphi, see Zeitlin 1996, 79–80, Mezzadri 1987, and Bergren 1983, 74. On the omphalos, see most recently, Sourvinou-Inwood 1991, 226–227, with bibliography. Note also that Apollo's punishment of Telphusa takes the form of burying her spring under rocks. See above, note 14.

[43] Detienne 1998, especially, 19–37, 85–122.

[44] The curious description of Niobe's petrifaction in Sophocles' Antigone offers a nice confirmation of this contrast between Apollo and Dionysos, one that is framed as an oxymoron of stone and ivy. Niobe was turned into stone, we may recall, as a result of her grief over the killing of her children by Apollo and Artemis, but in Sophocles' words, the process is described as growing upon her like the creeping encroachment of ivy (825–826). For the significance of this image with respect to the Dionysiac aspects of the play, see Zeitlin 1993, 158 and n. 28.

This contrast between an architecture of stable solidity and an invasive restlessness of movement may well be too neat. Stone and ivy are convenient emblems of opposition, and appeals to general categories of order vs. disorder are too vague and certainly too banal. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that Dionysiac activity shakes the earth and topples houses (for example, in Euripides' *Heracles* and, of course, the *Bacchae*) in a direct reversal of Apollo's role as builder. Apollo, we might say, constructs, while Dionysos deconstructs, and the difference is reflected in part between Apollo's role as founder and builder and Dionysos Lusios, the Loosener, which can ambivalently mean the one who redeems, or in this context, the one who destroys.

Perhaps even more to the point, Apollo sponsors matricide while Dionysos brings about the opposite result, as in the *Bacchae*, where he causes a mother, Agave, unwittingly to slay her son. Her initial offense was to reject the story that her sister, Semele, had been impregnated by a god. Driven by Dionysos into Bacchic madness in confirmation of his divinity, the god's vengeance consists of rupturing the bond between a mother and a son, an act undertaken in defense of his mother and in confirmation of his identity as his father's son. The logic of the myth, it would seem, requires an exact retaliation in kind. But it is also another powerful example of the more general tendency we have noted to create an antithesis between tender and hostile maternal figures. In effect, Dionysos' actions turn Agave into the bad, murderous, mother, who dismembers her own child, when Pentheus intrudes upon the women's rites, and there can be perhaps no more ironic words in Greek tragedy, than when Dionysos promises the young king that he will return to Thebes, 'cradled in his mother's arms' (Eur. *Ba.* 688). Matricide, on the other hand, is promoted by Apollo in defense of a father (Agamemnon), whom Clytemnestra had killed, and it is subsequently supported by a sister (Electra) in alliance with her brother. In both cases, however, generational continuity is endangered. In the first instance, it is interrupted directly by the son's death (Pentheus), and in the second (Orestes), by the resistance of powerful forces in the figures of Erinyes, avatars of the angry mother, who in turn threaten the life of the son, and are themselves often assimilated, at least in tragic diction, to maenads.

We can take one step further. Looking to Aeschylus' solution in the conflict between Apollo and the Erinyes in the last play of the

Oresteia, the poet has Apollo not only defend father right against mother right and support the younger generation against the older one in the newly established law court in Athens. The god also introduces the argument that the mother is not really kin to her child, but only the stranger host for the embryo, the passive vessel during its gestation. While Apollo draws on some scientific speculations of Aeschylus' day, he also crowns his argument through a mythological exemplum by reference to Athena, who herself was born without a mother. Hence if Dionysos insists on the intimate relationship between mother and child, both in his loyalty to Semele and his retaliation upon Agave, Apollo, at least in the *Oresteia*, would abrogate that relationship altogether to exonerate his client from the charge itself of matricide. For how can one be guilty of kin-killing, as the Erinyes claim, if the mother is merely a stranger to her offspring? Despite the promulgation of this theory as a universal concept, however, we should emphasize the fact that the story in question involved a transgressive woman. Clytemnestra murdered her own husband and would turn into the 'bad' mother, if she could, in her professed willingness to slay her son, in order to safeguard her own life and royal status.

Let us turn now to complete our comparative portraits of the two divinities. If the Homeric hymn establishes Apollo as the god who founds settlements wherever he goes, it also begins by naming his attributes as the bow, the lyre, and oracular power. The bow in particular earns him the titles of Hekaergos, the one who works from afar. But the manner in which he exercises his divinatory powers also establishes him as the one who speaks from afar, through the intermediary of the Pythia, the female figure in his service who transmits the sacred word. If Apollo is the god of light and revelation, however, it is noteworthy that he rarely appears in epiphany. Dionysos knows no such reticence. On the contrary, as the child of a god and mortal, he continually needs to claim recognition of his divine status. He must manifest the truth of his godhead to mortals in the form of an epiphany, one that is ever renewed, ever repeated. While many myths recount Apollo's direct interactions with mortals, it is more reasonable, as often noted, to think of him as the god of distances, who travels to remote places. Once he has completed a journey from Delos to Delphi in a trajectory that encompasses an entire Hellenic geography, he does not continue to travel, like Dionysos, to propagate his cult all over the world. If he supports the foundation of Greek colonies abroad through his oracular prestige, he does so from his secure mantic seat at Delphi in his capacity as the god who promotes stable, civic, institutions. For himself, however, he regularly goes to the land of the Hyperboreans and withdraws from his usual haunts, during the period in the winter, in fact, when in his absence he leaves the Delphic shrine to Dionysos. Even when present, Apollo is still more often remote and elusive, accessible obliquely as implied by his epithet, Loxias, a term that suggests more than the riddling nature of his oracular word. Founder and lawgiver, he makes his will known through indirect means. Dionysos, on the other hand, submerges himself in human affairs. His cult affords identification and even confusion between worshipper and worshipped, male and female, mortal and god. The remoteness attributed to Apollo and the modes of his influence has often been interpreted as signifying divine transcendence or sublimation. By contrast, Dionysos is identified with the somatic experiences of the physical body, in pain as in pleasure. These range from the trauma of his own birth to rites of dismemberment as to states of inebriation, and they affect mortals in turn, whether for ecstasy or destruction, or more generally, for blurring the boundaries of the individual self. Apollo may 'imitate' Zeus by rescuing his own son Asklepios in a Dionysos-like delivery from a dying mother (although not to the extent of providing him with a 'second birth'). Yet, as the representative of Apollo's healing arts, Asklepios survives only to meet finally the same fate as a Semele. He too is blasted by a thunderbolt of Zeus, and this because he attempted to heal death itself and to raise someone from Hades. In other words, Apollo oversteps the boundary for attempting to do for mortals what Dionysos experiences in his own person as the 'twice born' and through the symbolic values of mystic experience that emphasizes themes of death and rebirth for mortal initiates.[45]

---

[45] Apollo's intervention in the fate of Asklepios also results in the one occasion in which Apollo temporarily loses his divine status and condemned to serve a mortal for one year, he is demoted, in fact, to the lowliest of ranks. In anger at Zeus' fatal attack on Asklepios with his thunderbolt, Apollo had slain the Cyclopes (who furnished the thunderbolts). Note that this one act of rebellion against his father is dangerously directed against Zeus's primary weapons, the undisputed source of his authority. Zeus had originally intended to hurl him down to Tartaros, a punishment reserved for the greatest offenders to his sovereignty, but intervention, probably on the part of his ever protective mother, Leto (as at least one source reports) commutes the sentence to the above mentioned year of servitude. For discussion and the ancient sources, see Gantz 1993, 91–92. In Euripides' *Alcestis*, Apollo him-

These brief observations are far too limited and certainly too schematic to serve as anything more than a preliminary outline or thought experiment in approaching the complex relations between Dionysos and Apollo. But let me say a few words by way of conclusion with reference to the question of birth. I have pointed out the similarities between the two gods in that they are born from non-threatening mothers, who are highly evaluated in masculine ideology, and each experiences the hostility of persecuting anti-mothers. Yet the circumstances of Apollo's birth diverge substantially from those surrounding Dionysos. For all its specific details, especially with regard to the enforced delay in his birth, the story follows a more or less normal route of parturition in the experience of prolonged labor.[46] His subsequent conquest of the Delphic shrine, originally in the hands of females, turns into a masculine place under the authority of Zeus and by means of his own heroic, masculine, feats. Yet his seat at Delphi, a site I originally suggested was one of 'masculine maternity', in no way detracts from a special allegiance to his birthplace, Delos, in accordance with the promise he made to his mother to sanctify the site.[47] But for Dionysos, the mystery of his birth leads out into other directions, notably, the celebration of a mystery that sees him first born at the cost of his mother's life and subsequently reborn from his father's thigh. This obstetrical adventure (which bears a resemblance to Zeus's other feat in Athena's birth) remains at the heart of the far more complex activity of the god, whose birthplace is not fixed in tradition, and whose ability to cross boundaries (rather than fashioning them, as Apollo's constructive function does) also includes a confrontation with the most important of all boundaries, that between life and death, as between father and mother and their respective roles.

Additionally, of course, Dionysos also straddles the line between divinity and mortality in his parents' unequal status. And this is perhaps the point. Ordinarily, sexual unions between mortals and

---

self attempts to manipulate death, first, in arranging for Alcestis to substitute herself for Admetus and in the play, his encounter (failed) with Thanatos to rescue her.

[46] A form of dystocia. For this reason, perhaps, there is little iconographical interest in representing it, by contrast to the birth and infancy of Dionysos, which, starting in the fifth century, becomes a popular theme. See Loeb 1979, 28–56. On the other hand, the unusual circumstances of the births of Athena and Aphrodite (both engendered by male deities) are popular themes. The first is especially favored in the archaic period and the second from the fifth century on. See n. 53 below.

[47] In this respect, Slater's concept of 'dematrification' should be modified.

immortals result in progeny. While birth stories of other gods (such as Hermes) are repeated in hymns and theogonic texts are dedicated to the ways in which all the gods came into being, only Dionysos has a specific cultic song, the dithyramb, which, at least as ancient testimony seems to show, had as its first aim the celebration of the twice born god, and this enigma in turn constitutes the foundation of mysteries that are still imperfectly known.[48] The famous Eleusinian mysteries (in which Dionysos himself participated under the name of Iacchos) explored the connections between marriage and death in a resurrectional mode that is founded on the maturational experience of the *parthenos*, Persephone, who is snatched down to Hades as his bride, but, through the efforts of her mother, Demeter, is also allowed to return to the upper world, at least for part of the year. The mysteries of Dionysos probe further into an issue that is religious and social, but also profoundly psychological, since the question 'where did I come from' inevitably draws on every child's fascination with matters of sex, parentage, and the process of generation. This is one important reason perhaps that, by contrast to Apollo, the birth itself of Dionysos, his infancy and initial nurture, are all elements that are represented in cult, myth, and iconography. Yet, because he is a motherless child, his story by necessity also addresses surrogate forms of early parenting, whether in the persons of male figures (Hermes, Papposilenos) or female nurses (Tithenai, Nymphs, Ino, Thetis). Therefore, whatever fantasies surround the complex circumstances of Dionysos' birth, his subsequent fosterage by others may also reply, not only to broader issues of the child's place beyond the circle of the nuclear family, but to the exigencies of the real dangers attendant on the mother in childbirth.

It is significant, however, that both Apollo and Dionysos, despite their differences, owe not a little of their destinies to idealized mothers. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge the profound ambivalence that attends the question of maternity, especially in the conflict between the generative claims of each parent. For while any formal inquiry into origins necessarily confronts the question of woman, inasmuch as in ordinary life it is they, who gestate, bear, and nurse children, Greek myth, in many of its manifestations, also confronts a strongly masculine society with what they know but would often like to circumvent or deny—namely, that man is born from woman. Given the strong maternal values attributed to Gaia or Earth the mother, it is no surprise that a favorite alternative is autochthony, or birth from the earth itself, as a way of bypassing the role of a natural biological female. Even Zeus in the *Theogony*, as I have argued elsewhere, gains the status of a quasi-autochthon by the fact of Gaia's intervention to whose care he is entrusted. Hiding him 'in a remote cave beneath the secret places of the holy earth' (482–484), he receives his nurture from the goddess in her own domain.[49] More generally, myths found at Athens and elsewhere, ascribe the origins of human communities to autochthonous origins and their value lie in the political appeal to a symbolic fraternity of its male citizens in the interests of a patriotic defense of their land.[50] This solution, along with the competition between the sexes for control of reproduction, a contest on the divine level won by the paternal principle, may well have a longer history in the Greek conquest of the Mediterranean, a region where, it has often been argued, female deities first held sway.

---

[48] Hesiod's *Theogony* (940–942) neatly summarizes the situation: 'a mortal gave birth to an immortal. Now both are gods'.

Certainly, the father's victory (despite repeated efforts to subvert his authority) reflects social conditions of family structure in which a woman's role is to guarantee her husband the production of legitimate children in the continuation of his lineage. The scenario common to both Dionysos and Apollo that involves Hera's malevolent interventions may also reflect competition between women in a society that reserves prestige for those who bear beautiful sons. Yet, the irregularities of the birth stories of Dionysos and Apollo in myth, attributed as they are to the paternity of Zeus by different mothers, also subvert legitimate marriage, despite the frequent cultic roles of Zeus and Hera as its patrons.[51] Zeus' infidelities, protested by Hera, suggest further considerations. One of the paradoxes of a polytheistic system, generally organized along family lines, is its simultaneous adherence to and violation of these norms. Zeus's procreative powers need to advertise the superiority of male fecundation over the limitations of female child bearing. At the same time, as remarked at the outset, those same powers should in no way produce a child who would succeed him. On the one hand, in accordance with widespread patterns pertaining to the myth of the hero,[52] those marked off for a special destiny, whether mortal or divine, whether in fact Apollo or Dionysos, are subject to unusual circumstances of conception, birth, and early nurture before they gain the recognition that is rightfully theirs. On the other, offspring of legitimate marriage pose a more potent threat to Zeus's hegemony since these are normally the rightful heirs to dynastic succession. For all their differences, the mythic strategies deployed in the birth stories of our two gods, each in its own way, confront these issues (among others) by bringing the younger generation from birth to Olympus as sons but not heirs of the supreme god.[53]

---

[49] This is one of the ways in which Zeus, the last born, gains the prestige of the beginnings. See above, n. 5.

[50] See, in particular, the work of Nicole Loraux 1981 and elsewhere.

[51] Responses to adultery in the divine world confirm this paradox. In addition to the bard's account of Ares and Aphrodite in book 8 of the *Odyssey*, the Homeric *Hymn to Aphrodite* faults the goddess not only because she promotes erotic mismatches between partners of unequal rank, but because she encourages adultery, especially in the case of Zeus, who, by her wiles, is made 'to forget Hera, his revered wife' (36–40).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bachofen, J.J., *Das Mutterrecht,* 3d ed. (3 vols.) ed. K. Meuli (Basel 1948). Original publication in 1861.

Baltes, M., Die Kataloge im homerischen Apollonhymnus, *Philologus* 125 (1982), 25–43.

Beaumont, L., Mythological Childhood: A Male Preserve?, *Annual of the British School at Athens* 90 (1995), 339–61.

——, Born Old or Never Young? Femininity, Childhood and the Goddesses of Ancient Greece, in: S. Blundell and M. Williamson (eds.), *The Sacred and the Feminine in Ancient Greece* (London and New York 1998), 71–95.

Bergren, A., Language and the Female in Early Greek Thought, *Arethusa* 16 (1983), 69–95.

Burkert, W., *Homo Necans: The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth,* trans. P. Bing (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1983).

---

[52] As studied, most famously, by Otto Rank (1914:1952).

[53] Beaumont 1995 and 1998 observes that in the archaic and classical periods only male gods are represented as infants, in contrast to iconographical renderings of the births of Aphrodite and Athena, who are shown as full-fledged adults from the beginning. Not surprising perhaps is that these are also the two female deities who are engendered from males alone. Even in later periods, representation of goddesses as children is relatively rare. Beaumont accounts for the iconographical disparity as reflecting a double disability in social terms of femininity and infancy. Hence, she argues (1998, 89) that while 'male gods possess the capacity to develop their full divine power, the female child conversely personifies and embodies a state of being incompatible with the nature of divinity'. The example of Athena is the one she finds most problematic, especially since Zeus' other child is Dionysos, the infant god par excellence, but her theory can hardly account for the omission.

Carpenter, T.H., *Dionysian Imagery in Archaic Greek Art: Its Development in Black-figure Vase Painting* (Oxford 1986).

——, *Dionysian Imagery in Fifth-century Athens* (Oxford 1997).

Clay, J.S., *The Politics of Olympus: Form and Meaning in the Major Homeric Hymns* (Princeton 1989).

Daraki, M., *Dionysos* (Paris 1985).

Delcourt, M., *Oreste et Alcméon. Étude sur la projection légendaire du matricide* (Paris 1949).

Demand, N., *Birth, Death, and Motherhood in Classical Greece* (Baltimore and London 1994).

——, Monuments, Midwives and Gynecology, in: Ph.J. Van der Eijk, H.F.J. Horstmanshoff, P.H. Schrijvers (eds.), *Ancient Medicine in its Socio-Cultural Context*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam 1995) 275–88.

Detienne, M., *Apollon le couteau à la main: une approche expérimentale du polythéisme grec* (Paris 1998).

Fontenrose, J., *Python: A Study of Delphic Myth and its Origins* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1959).

Gantz, T., *Early Greek Myth: A Guide to Literary and Artistic Sources* (Baltimore 1993).

Hanson, A.E., Conception, Gestation, and the Origin of Female Nature, *Helios* 19 (1992), 31–71.

——, A division of labor. Roles for men in Greek and Roman births, *Thamyris* 1 (1994), 157–202.

Harrison, J.E., *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (Cambridge ^{3}1922).

Jameson, M., The Asexuality of Dionysus, in: T. Carpenter and C. Faraone (eds.), *Masks of Dionysus* (Ithaca, NY, 1993), 44–64.

Jeanmaire, H., *Dionysos: histoire du culte de Bacchus* (Paris 1951).

Kerényi, K., *Dionysos: Archetypal Image of Indestructible Life*, trans. R. Manheim (Princeton 1976).

King, H., *Hippocrates' Woman. Reading the Female Body in Ancient Greece* (London and New York 1998).

Laager, J., *Geburt und Kindheit des Gottes in der griechischen Mythologie* (Winterthur 1957).

Loeb, E., *Die Geburt der Götter in der griechischen Kunst der klassischen Zeit* (Jerusalem 1979).

Loraux, N., *Les enfants d'Athéna* (Paris 1981).

——, *Les Expériences de Tirésias* (Paris 1989) 219–31: Et l'on déboutera les mères.

Lyons, D., *Gender and Immortality: Heroines in Ancient Greek Myth and Cult* (Princeton 1997) .

Mezzadri, B., La pierre et le foyer: notes sur les v. 453–506 de la Théogonie hésiodique, *Métis* 2 (1987), 215–220.

Mineur, W.H., *Callimachus, Hymn to Delos* (Leiden 1984).

Nilsson, M.P., *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, 2 vols. (Munich ^{3}1967).

Onians, R.B., *The Origins of European Thought* (Cambridge 1951).

Ramnoux, C., *Mythologie, ou la famille olympienne* (Paris 1962).

Rank, O., *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero: A Psychological Interpretation of Mythology*, trans. F. Robbins and S. Ely (New York 1952). Original publication in 1914.

Slater, P., *The Glory of Hera* (Boston 1968).

Solomon, J., The Wandering Womb of Delos, in: M. deForest (ed.), *Woman's Power, Man's Game: Essays on Classical Antiquity in Honor of Joy J. King* (Wauconda, Il., 1993), 91–108.

Sourvinou-Inwood, C., *'Reading' Greek Culture: Texts and Images, Rituals and Myths* (Oxford 1991) 217–243: Myth as History: The Previous Owners of the Delphic Oracle.

Thalmann, W., *Conventions of Form and Thought in Early Greek Poetry* (Baltimore and London 1984).

Vernant, J.-P., *Mortals and Immortals*, ed. F.I. Zeitlin (Princeton 1991).

Versnel, H.S., *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion, I. Ter Unus. Isis, Dionysos,* *Hermes: Three Studies in Henotheism* (Studies in Greek and Roman Religion 6, I, Leiden 1990, ^{2}1998) 96–205: Dionysos: Eis Dionysos: The Tragic Paradox of the Bacchae.

Versnel, H.S., *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman religion, II. Transition and Reversal in Myth and Ritual* (Studies in Greek and Roman Religion 6, II, Leiden 1993) 289–334: Apollo and Mars One Hundred Years after Roscher.

Villanueva Puig, M.-C., À propos des Thyiades de Delphes, in: *L'Association dionysiaque dans les sociétés anciennes. Actes de la table ronde organisée par l'École Française de Rome, Rome 24–25 Mai 1984* (Rome 1986), 31–51.

Zeitlin, F.I., Staging Dionysus between Thebes and Athens, in: C. Faraone and T.H. Carpenter (eds.), *Masks of Dionysus* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1993), 147–82.

——, *Playing the Other: Gender and Society in Classical Greek Literature* (Chicago 1996), 53–86: Signifying Difference: The Case of Pandora.

I. INDEX OF NAMES AND SUBJECTS

Achilleus 172ff.
Agaue 210
Aigisthos 117
Alalkomenai 34ff.
Alkmaion 207
Amphiaraos 207
amulet 74, 89
Anagogia 31
Androgeos 117
animals, sacrificial 118ff.
Anthesteria 40
Aphrodite 31, 195
Aphrodite Euploia 146
Aphrodite Galenaie 146
Aphrodite Limenia 146
Aphrodite Pandamos 143–160
Aphrodite Pontia 143–160
Apocalypse 127–141
Apollo 183, 193–218
Apophis 101
arche 195
Ares 118
arete 53
Argos 29
Artemis 30, 204f.
Artemis Agrotera 39
Artemis Kindyas 37, 154
Artemis Tauropolos 115
Asklepios 119, 212
Astarte 147ff.
astrology 74f.
Athena 195f.
Athena Ergane 145
Athena Hygieia 145
Athena Nike 145
Athena Polias 145
Athena Skiras 39
Athirat 150
athletes, curse against 103ff.
athletic games 133
Augustinus 57

barley 121
Basilinna 169
Bes 100
bilingual, Graeco-Phoenician 147ff.
biology 14ff.
birth 193–218
bow 211
bull 161–191

Caere 149f.
Caesarea 136
castration 185, 195
Chaldaean Oracles 82
charakteres 71ff.
chariot 31
Charites 117, 177f., 186
Chios 120, 136
colonies 212
communication, ritual as 114ff.
Corpus Hermeticum 59f., 81
cow 118f.

Daidala 23–48
Daidale 24ff.
daidaleion 33
damos/demos 152ff.
Danae 196
deer 119
Delos 199ff., 208
Delphi 173, 183, 194, 200ff.
Delphyne 200f.
dematrification 207f.
Demeter 119, 214
Demeter Thesmophoros 41
dendrokopion tes Heras on Kos 29
Dionysiades 169
Dionysos 39, 119, 161–191, 193–218
Dionysos Bougenes 173
Dionysos Katagogios 144
Dionysos Liknites 183
Dionysos Lysios 39, 210
Dionysos Phleos 144
Dipolieia 35
dithyramb 214
dog 118f.

Eileithyia 149, 198
Elaphebolia 30
Elektra 210
Eleusinian mysteries 214
Eleutheria at Plataiai 37
Elis 161–191
eniautos daimon 4
Enuma elish 4
Enyalios 118
Ephesos 127, 132f., 137, 139
epiphany 161, 211
Erinyes 195, 210f.
Eriphyle 207
Erythrai 152
Eryx 31
eudaimonia 53
Eumaios 117
euploia 152

fertility ritual 29–33
festivals 23–48
fire ritual 29–33
flute-player 117
foot, of Dionysos 161–191
foreigners 154

Gaia 195ff., 215
Genetyllides 118
Gerarai 168
goat 118f.
goose 119

Hades 214
hair 122
Halai Araphenides 115
Harrison, Jane 1–2
Hekate 118
Helios 119
Hephaistos 196
Hera 171, 176, 198ff.
Hera Chera 26
Hera Gamelios 25
Hera Kithaironia 29
Hera Nymphagogos 25
Hera Nympheuomene 25
Hera Pais 26
Hera Teleia 25ff.
Heraia on Samos 29
Hermes 214
Hermes Trismegistos 59f., 75
hero cult 172ff.
heros 165f.
hieros gamos 27–29
Hippodameia 169, 172
hosioi 183
human sacrifice 34
Hyakinthia 39
hymnos kletikos 161–191
Hyperboreans 212

Iakchos 214
Iamblichos 80ff.
images, magical 97ff.
Imperial cult 127–141
incantations 82
Ino 214
Iphigeneia 35
Isis 150
ivy 210

John 127–141
Julianus Apostata 56ff.

Kadmos 198
Katagogia 31
killing 7, 115, 122f.
kingship, sacral 4
Kithairon 24ff.
Klytaimnestra 207, 210f.
knife 121
Knossos 31
Koinon 133, 135
Koinon of the Boiotians 36
korai 205
Koronis 204
Kos 29
Kos 143–160
kouroi 205
Kronos 195, 209
Kyzikos 133

Laodikeia 132f.
Laphria 30
lecanomancy 75
Leda 195
Leto 198ff., 206
Leukippides 169
Leukothea 149f.
Lévi-Strauss, Claude 11ff.
Lorenz, Konrad 6, 15
Loxias 212
Lugalbanda 18f.
Lykourgos 181
lyre 211

maenads 203, 207
magic 69–111
Malinowski, Bronislav 3
marriage 27–29, 156
materia magica 82ff.
meal, sacrificial 117f., 122, 134
metics 154
Metis 197
Minos 117
Mnemosyne 207
monotheism 49ff.
Muses 207
mysteries of Dionysos 214
myth and ritual 1–22

names, magical power of 76ff.
Nasreddin Hoca 23
Nechepso 75
Neoplatonism 55
Nestor 117
Niobe 202, 204
Nymphs 214

ololyge 122
Olympia 171ff., 177
omphalos 209
onomata barbara 71ff.
oracle 211
Orestes 207, 210
Origenes 79ff.
Orphic tradition 198
Orthia 174
Oschophoria 39f.
Osiris 101
Ouranos 195
ox 118f., 161–191
ox-foot 162

palindrome 85ff.
Papposilenos 214
papyri, magical 69–111
parthenogenesis 195
Pentheus 204, 210
Pergamon 132f.
persecution of Christians 127–141
Persephone 31, 119, 214
Petosiris 75
phallos 204
Philadelphia 132f.
Phoibe 205
Phoibos 205
Physkoa 169ff.
pig 118f.
Plataia 24ff.
Plataiai 24ff.
Pliny the Younger 130f.
polytheism 49ff., 151f.
pompe 37
Pompei, Villa dei Misteri 6
Porphyrios 57
Poseidon 118, 151
postmodernism 13
prayer 121
pregnancy, male 195
Priene 144
priest 179
priest, Egyptian 72ff.
priesthood, sale of 143ff., 156ff.
procession 37, 120f., 123, 179, 204
Proklos 82
Pyanopsia 39f.
Pyrgi 149
Pythia 211

raven 34
Religionsgeschichte 49–67
Religionswissenschaft 1–22, 49–67
Renaissance 58–60
rites de passage 2
Roman religion 54ff.

sacrifice 7, 18, 33–35, 113–125, 131, 136, 153
Samos 29
Sardis 132f.
satyrs 204
sea 146ff., 166ff.
Semele 27–28, 198ff.
Seth 101
sheep 118f.
Sidon 147ff.
Silenos 177
Smyrna 132f.
sociobiology 16
sociology 8ff., 116
splanchna 120, 122

stone 209
structuralism 11ff.
swine 118f.
synoecism (Kos) 154f.

Tartaros 202
technopaignia 87
telos 195
Tenedos 117
Tenes 117
texts, magical 85ff.
Thargelia 39f.
Themis 205
Theodosius 57, 62
Theseus 39
Thespiai 29
Thetis 181, 214
Thyia 167, 182
Thyiades 181ff.
Thyiai 181
Thyiateira 132
Tityos 202, 204
Trajan 128ff.
Tralleis 133
tree 23–48
twin birth 204
Typho 201f.

uterus 199

water 121
wedding 27–29
women and Dionysos 161–191, 203

Zeus 25ff., 194ff.
Zeus Philios 129

II. INDEX OF ANCIENT SOURCES

The abbreviations of authors and works used below are in line with the *Greek-English Lexicon* (edd. H.G. Liddell & R. Scott; new edition), the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (ed. P.G.W. Glare) and the *Patristic Greek Lexicon* (ed. G.W.H. Lampe). The abbreviations of epigraphic publications follow the list in *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum. Consolidated Index for Volumes XXXVI–XLV (1986–1995)* (ed. J.H.M. Strubbe); those of papyrological publications follow the *Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets* (Web edition).

1. *Greek and Latin Authors*

Achilles Tatius
1.2 149

Aelianus
NA 4.2 31
VH 1.15 31
VH 1.20 149

Aeschylus
A. 245 185
A. 1125f. 185
Eu. 1–20 205
Pr. 172f. 77
Semele 199

Agatharchides of Knidos
FGrH 86F5 42

Alcman
PMG 14b 165, 166

Anacreon
484 153

Anthologia Palatina
3.1 202

Antoninus Liberalis
10.2 184

Apollodorus
1.4.1 202, 204
3.4.3 28, 199
3.7.5 208
3.15.7 117
3.53 202

Apollonius Rhodius
3.280 187

Apuleius
Met. 11.23 75

Aristophanes
Av. 55 120
Lys. 217f. 185
Lys. 579–580 154
Nu. 311 186
Ra. 331 161
Th. 957 187

Aristotle
Mir. 123 168
Oec. 1349b34 149

Athenaeus
34A 168, 175
297D–E 42
394B 31
675F–676C 149

Caesar
Civ. 3.47.6 121

Callimachus
Del. 36–40 200, 208
Del. 59–70 198
Del. 70–76 200
Del. 83–88 200

Cicero
Leg. 2.19f. 119

Clemens
1Ep. 61.1–2 140

Clemens Alexandrinus
Protr. 3.46.3 29

Cornutus
ND 28 41

Damascius
In Phlb. 24 78

Demosthenes
59.73–78 168

Didache
16.4 134

Digesta
48.22.7.2 127

Diodorus of Sicily
3.64.3–4 199
3.66 175
4.2.2–3 199
4.3.3 187
4.25.4 202
5.72.4 29
15.14.3–4 149
15.76.2 155

Euphorio
Fr.Hist. 100 179

Euripides
Ba. 198
Ba. 1–9 199
Ba. 167 187
Ba. 402–416 186
Ba. 618 184
Ba. 688 210
Ba. 863f. 187
Ba. 920 184
Ba. 1017 184
Ba. 1159 184
El. 791f. 117
Hel. 1555 185
IA 275 185
IA 1471 121
Ion passim 206
IT 1234–1282 205
IT 1239 206
IT 1249–1251 206
IT 1457–1461 115

Firmicus Maternus
Err.Prof.Rel. 27.2 31

Gorgias
Hel. (*DK* 82F11.10) 77

Hesiod
Th. 196
Th. 1–115 207
Th. 406–408 206
Th. 409–411 208
Th. 819–821 202
Th. 886–895 197
Th. 927–999 202
Th. 940–942 214

Hesychius
σαλαίς 153

Hippocrates
Morb.Sacr. 2.18 118

Homer
Il. 6.130–140 181
Il. 6.136 162
Il. 9.362 152
Il. 14.158–360 199
Il. 14.325 186
Il. 19.95–125 199
Il. 22.170f. 120
Il. 24.602–617 204
Od. 3.58 120
Od. 3.419f. 117
Od. 3.464–469 122
Od. 14.419f. 117

Hyginus
Fab. 140 198
Fab. 167 199
Fab. 179 199

Hymni Homerici
h.Ap. 14–18 204
h.Ap. 95–101 199
h.Ap. 242–276 201
h.Ap. 323–325 201
h.Ap. 375–387 201
h.Bacch. (1) 199
h.Bacch. (1) 3 175
h.Bacch. (7) 2 183
h.Merc. passim 206
h.Ven. 36–40 215

Iamblichus
Myst. 7.4f. (254.12–256.17) 80

Irenaeus
Haer. 5.30.3 128

Lactantius
Inst. 1.17.8 29

Lucretius
1–9 151

Novum Testamentum
Apoc. (or Rev.) passim 127–140
1Ep.Cor. 1.10–13 139
1Ep.Cor. 3.3–4 139
2Ep.Cor. 11.7–11 139
1Ep.Pet. 2.13–17 139, 140
Ep.Rom. 13.1–7 140
2Ep.Thess. 2.1–12 134
1Ep.Tim. 2.2 140

Ev.Marc. 9.38–40 139
Ev.Marc. 12.17 140
Ev.Marc. 13.22 134

Oracula Chaldaica
150 79

Oracula Sibyllina
3.68–69 134

Origenes
Hom.1–26 in Jos. 20.1 78
Hom.1–28 in Num. 11.4 79
Cels. 1.24 79
Cels. 1.25 78, 79
Cels. 4.43 79
Cels. 4.48 78
Cels. 5.45 79
Cels. 8.58 80

Ovidius
Fast. 1.355–361 119
Met. 3.253–309
  (esp. 260f.) 28
Met. 3.256–315 199

Pausanias
passim 168–169, 171, 174–178
1.1.3 145
2.17.3 29
2.31.2 202
2.34.11 146
2.37.5 202
5.3.2 187
6.20.7 172
6.23.3 172
6.25.1 146
6.26.1 167
6.26.4 167
8.6.5 187
8.19.2 184
8.24.8 208
8.32.2 146
9.2.7–3.3 24, 44–46
9.3.5 37
9.16.3–4 146
10.11.1 202

Pherecydes
FGrH 3F56 204

Pindar
Fr. 33D 200
O. 13.18f. 178
P. 3.8–46 204
P. 4.90–92 204
Pae. 5.40–42 209
Pae. 7B.43–52 209

Plato
Cra. 391D-E 78
Euthphr. 14B–D 120
Lg. 799A5f. 59
Phlb. 12C 78
R. 2.381D 199
Smp. 182B1–6 187
Ti. 91B–C 200

Pliny
Nat. 18.74 121
Nat. 36.20 155

Pliny the Younger
Ep. 10.96.10 120
Ep. 10.96–97 130

Plotinus
2.9.9 56
4.4.43 78

Plutarchus
FGrH 388F1 *(Plat.Daidal.)* 24, 43–44
Mor. *(San.Praec.)* 132E 117
Mor. *(Mul.Virt.)* 251E 170
Mor. *(Quaest.Rom.)* 265A 120
Mor. *(Quaest.Graec.)* 296F 121
Mor. *(Quaest.Graec.)* 297D–E 117
Mor. *(Quaest.Graec.)* 299A–B 161, 185
Mor. *(Quaest.Graec.)* 301E–F 118
Mor. *(De Iside)* 354A–368D 101
Mor. *(De Iside)* 364E–365A 163, 173, 182, 183, 185
Mor. *(De Iside)* 366E 100
Mor. *(De Iside)* 371C 98
Mor. *(Cohib.Ira)* 458A 115
Mor. *(Sera Num.Vind.)*
  565F–566A 202

Poetae Melici Graeci
871 162
917 175
See also Alcman, Stesichorus

Polyaenus
Strat. 5.2.21 149

Porphyrius of Tyr
Abst. 2.6 121
Abst. 2.28–30 35

Proclus
In Cra. 71 78
In Prm. 853.1–3 78

Psellus
Exeg.Orac.Chald. (PG 122)
1132C 79

Sophocles
Ant. 825–826 209
Ant. 1143 161
Fr. 255 (ed. Radt) 179

Stesichorus
PMG 239 201

Strabo
5.2.8 149
8.3.4 167
8.3.12 175
10.3.10 181
14.2.19 155

Tacitus
Hist. 2.3–4 149

Theophrastus
Sens. 32–33 78

Theopompus of Chios
FGrH 115F277 168, 175

Thucydides
2.102–103 208

Vetus Testamentum
Jo. 15.13–63 77

Xenophanes
DK 21A13 178

Xenophon
HG 3.2.26 180

2. *Greek and Latin Inscriptions*

An.Ép.
(1907) 68f. 92

Audollent, *DefixTab*
233 92
237 90
244–245 92
252 92
275 92

CIL
VIII 12508 90

Herzog, *KFF*
217 146

I.Cret.
III 2.2 2
I.Délos
2132 149
2305 149

IG
II^2 1006 184
II^2 3425 149
XII.5 221 152

IGR
IV 947–948 136

I.Knidos
103 146

Iscr.Cos
ED 178A 143–158
EV 2 153
EV 259 145, 147

Kotansky, *Greek Magical Amulets*
18 92
37 90
46 90
54 88
58 92
62 90, 92

LSAM
37 144

LSCG
92 35
96 155
151 155
154A 155
169A 153, 155
172 153
181 169
301 154

LSCGSuppl.
14 40
41 35

Maiuri, *NS*
475 146
495 146
496 147
675 154

PH
367–368 154
387 154

SEG
I 265 152
XXXVI 758 147, 155
XXXVI 1039 152
XXXVII 497A 184
XLV 1508A 37
XLVII 1560 154

Zuntz, *Persephone*
p. 300f. A.1 187

3. *Greek Papyri*

Pap.Graec.Berol.
13270 (= *BKT* V.2 270; *PMG* 917) 175

Pap.Graec.Mag.
I-II 69
I 36 81
I 42–195 84
I 143–147 98
I 195–222 84
III 69
III 1–164 69
III 119 80
III 282–409 84
III 467–494 70
IV 69, 70
IV *passim* 70, 84, 98
IV 181 88
IV 296–466 92
IV 409–434 92, 96
IV 475–829 75
IV 830–834 69
IV 1010 80
IV 1296–1299 82
IV 1304f. 86
IV 1941f. 86
IV 1999f. 88
IV 3071f. 88
IV 3085 80
V 69
V 54–59 70
V 79–90 88
V 96–172 84
V 115 81
V 238–243 98
V 370–446 84
VI 1–47 84
VII 69
VII *passim* 84
VII 220 87
VII 222–249 98
VII 300 97
VII 656 87
VII 866–873 98
VII 930–939 92
VII 940–968 101
VII 942–951 101–103
VIII 1–63 84
VIII 64–110 98
VIII 110f. 99–100
IX 13f. 81
X 29–35 97
XII 69, 70
XII 17–20 98
XII 121–128 87
XII 145f. 98
XII 201–207 98
XIII 69, 81, 84
XIII 308–313 98
XIII 621f. 81
XIII 835–841 97
XIII 836–842 85
XIII 905–911 85, 97
XIV c 21 81
XIV c 24 86
XIX a 16–48 97
XXXV 88
XXXVI 50–66 92
XXXVI 69–101 103
XXXVI 107 87
XXXVI 115–133 103, 105
XXXVI 241–245 103–104
XLIX 92
LVIII 71
LIX 5–10 87
LXI 69
P.Brit.Mus.
CXXI 87

P.Paris
2316 88

Suppl.Mag.
(edd. Daniel-Maltomini)
1 87
3 87
7 88
9 87
11 87
38 90
39 80
45 81
48 92
57 95, 96
67 86
72 86
74 86
91–275 70

RELIGIONS IN THE GRAECO-ROMAN WORLD

114. Green, T.M. *The City of the Moon God.* Religious Traditions of Harran. 1992. ISBN 90 04 09513 6
115. Trombley, F.R. *Hellenic Religion and Christianization c. 370-529.*
     Volume 1. Reprint 1995. ISBN 90 04 09624 8
     Volume 2. Reprint 1995. ISBN 90 04 09691 4
116. Friesen, S.J. *Twice Neokoros.* Ephesus, Asia and the Cult of the Flavian Imperial Family. 1993. ISBN 90 04 09689 2
117. Hornum, M.B. *Nemesis, the Roman State, and the Games.* 1993. ISBN 90 04 09745 7
118. Lieu, S.N.C. *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia and the Roman East.* 1994. ISBN 90 04 09742 2 Reprint 1998.
119. Pietersma, A. *The Apocryphon of Jannes and Jambres the Magicians.* P. Chester Beatty xvi (with New Editions of Papyrus Vindobonensis Greek inv. 29456 + 29828 verso and British Library Cotton Tiberius B. v f. 87). Edited with Introduction, Translation and Commentary. With full facsimile of all three texts. 1994. ISBN 90 04 09938 7
120. Blok, J.H. *The Early Amazons.* Modern and Ancient Perspectives on a Persistent Myth. 1994. ISBN 90 04 10077 6
121. Meyboom, P.G.P. *The Nile Mosaic of Palestrina.* Early Evidence of Egyptian Religion in Italy. 1994. ISBN 90 04 10137 3
122. McKay, H.A. *Sabbath and Synagogue.* The Question of Sabbath Worship in Ancient Judaism. 1994. ISBN 90 04 10060 1
123. Thom, J.C. *The Pythagorean Golden Verses.* With Introduction and Commentary. 1994. ISBN 90 04 10105 5
124. Takács, S.A. *Isis and Sarapis in the Roman World.* 1994. ISBN 90 04 10121 7
125. Fauth, W. *Helios Megistos.* Zur synkretistischen Theologie der Spätantike. 1995. ISBN 90 04 10194 2
126. Rutgers, L.V. *The Jews in Late Ancient Rome.* Evidence of Cultural Interaction in the Roman Diaspora. 1995. ISBN 90 04 10269 8
127. Van Straten, F.T. *Hierà kalá.* Images of Animal Sacrifice in Archaic and Classical Greece. 1995. ISBN 90 04 10292 2
128. Dijkstra, K. *Life and Loyalty.* A Study in the Socio-Religious Culture of Syria and Mesopotamia in the Graeco-Roman Period Based on Epigraphical Evidence. 1995. ISBN 90 04 09996 4
129. Meyer, M. & P. Mirecki (eds.) *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power.* 1995. ISBN 90 04 10406 2

130. Smith, M. & S.J.D. Cohen (eds.) *Studies in the Cult of Yahweh.* 2 volumes. ISBN 90 04 10372 4 (set)
Vol. 1: *Studies in Historical Method, Ancient Israel, Ancient Judaism.* 1996. ISBN 90 04 10477 1
Vol. 2: *Studies in New Testament, Early Christianity, and Magic.* 1996. ISBN 90 04 10479 8

131. Lane, E.N. (ed.) *Cybele, Attis and Related Cults.* Essays in Memory of M.J. Vermaseren. 1996. ISBN 90 04 10196 9

132. Lukian von Samosata *Alexandros oder der Lügenprophet.* Eingeleitet, herausgegeben, übersetzt und erklärt von U. Victor. 1997. ISBN 90 04 10792 4

133. De Jong, A. *Traditions of the Magi.* Zoroastrianism in Greek and Latin Literature. 1997. ISBN 90 04 10844 0

134. Frankfurter, D. *Pilgrimage and Holy Space in Late Antique Egypt.* 1998. ISBN 90 04 11127 1

135. Ustinova, Y. *The Supreme Gods of the Bosporan Kingdom.* Celestial Aphrodite and the Most High God. 1998. ISBN 90 04 11231 6

136 Healey, John F. *The Religion of the Nabataeans.* A Conspectus. 2001. ISBN 90 04 10754 1

137. Drijvers, J.W. & J.W. Watt *Portraits of Spiritual Authority.* Religious Power in Early Christianity, Byzantium and the Christian Orient. 1999. ISBN 90 04 11459 9

138. Dirven, L. *The Palmyrenes of Dura-Europos.* A Study of Religious Interaction in Roman Syria. 1999. ISBN 90 04 11589 7

139. Rothaus, R.M. *Corinth: The First City of Greece.* An Urban History of Late Antique Cult and Religion. 2000. ISBN 90 04 10922 6

140. Bricault, L. (éd.) *De Memphis à Rome.* Actes du Ier Colloque international sur les études isiaques, Poitiers – Futuroscope, 8-10 avril 1999. 2000. ISBN 90 04 11736 9

141. Mirecki, P., & M. Meyer (eds.) *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World.* 2001. ISBN 90 04 11676 1

142. Horstmanshoff, H.F.J., H.W. Singor, F.T. van Straten, & J.H.M. Strubbe (eds.) *Kykeon.* Studies in Honour of H.S. Versnel. 2002. ISBN 90 04 11983 3

143. Morand, A.-F. *Etudes sur les* Hymnes orphiques. 2001. ISBN 90 04 12030 0